

# Law and Inclusion

## *Stakeholders' View of Special Needs in Bangladesh*

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Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education  
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# **Law and Inclusion**

## ***Stakeholders' View of Special Needs in Bangladesh***

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Title: Law and Inclusion-Stakeholders' View of Special Needs in Bangladesh

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# Summary

The study was carried out in Dhaka, Bangladesh from July to December 2011. The objective was to investigate the stakeholders' awareness about the educational laws of special needs children, describe the findings and to recommend some future plans for the government of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is extremely enthusiastic about signing the national and international treaty and resolution. As a result, the researcher wanted to find out how much stakeholders know about these laws in a real-life situation.

The study followed a case study with a qualitative approach with the design of an open ended informal interview. Due to the objectives, the study is descriptive in nature.

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The sample comprises eight of the stakeholders from different walks of life whom are directly or indirectly related to the education sector and special education in Bangladesh.

The results show that apart from specific matters in specific situation, almost all of the stakeholders feel the need for the special law for the education of children with special needs.

Some important findings are that some of the stakeholders are not at all aware about the existing laws for the children with special needs. Some of the stakeholders do not support the inclusion of the children with special needs but agreed to have separate schools for them.

The findings will give the readers an idea about the stakeholders view about the laws and education of the children with special needs.

Recommendation for suggesting the policy makers to think, adopt or make new laws for the children with special needs.

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# Abbreviations

BANBEIS-	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS-	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BNSB-	Bangladesh National Society for the Blind
BNFE-	Bureau of Non-Formal Education
BPKS-	Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallayan Somity
CRC-	Convention of the Rights of the Children
CRP –	Center for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed
CSID-	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
CSIE-	Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
CWD-	Children With Disability
DFID-	Department For International Development
DPE-	Directorate of Primary Education
DRRA-	Disabled Rehabilitation and Research Association
FFE-	Food For Education
GOB-	Government Of Bangladesh
GPS-	Government Primary School
JICA-	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MOE-	Ministry Of Education
MoPME-	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NAPE-	National Academy for Primary Education
NCSE-	National Center for Special Education
NEP-	National Education Policy
NFDDP-	National Foundation for the Development of Disabled Person
NFPE-	Non Formal Primary Education
NFOWD-	National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled
NGO-	Non Government Organization
NORAD-	Norwegian Agency for Development
NPA-	National Plan of Action
ODA-	Overseas Development Administration
PEDP-	Primary Education Development Program
PMED-	Primary and Mass Education Division

PTI-	Primary teacher Training Institute
PWD-	Person With Disability
RNGPS-	Registered Non-Government Primary School
SAHIC-	Society for Assistance to Hearing Impaired Children
SARPV-	Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically
Vulnerable	
SCEMRB-	Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled
SWID-	Society for the Welfare of Intellectual Disability
UPE-	Universal Compulsory Primary Education
VHSS-	Voluntary Health Services Society
WEAC-	Wisconsin Education Association Council



# Foreword

According to World Health Organization, 10% of young people in South Asia are facing some kind of disability. Bangladesh is one of the countries where disabled children are fighting for their basic needs to be met. Education is considered to be a far cry for these children. My main inquiry from this study was to find out the stakeholders' view about their thinking of special needs children as a whole.

Now I will take this opportunity to say thank you to some of the important people whom I am very much grateful for my thesis.

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was so patient with me when we studied together, even when I was a pain in the neck. Thanks also go to all of my cousins, who always treat me like a princess in the family.

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I wish I could mention the names of all the important people in my life. But I will always treasure them in my heart.

Kind Regards

Shahnaz Parveen

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# Contents

1	. Introduction	
1.1	Bangladesh – an overview .....	1
1.1.1	General information .....	1
1.1.2	Education system .....	3
1.1.3	Children with disabilities .....	6
1.1.4	Inclusive education.....	13
1.2	Statement of the research problem .....	16
1.2.1	Research Problem:.....	16
1.2.2	Significance of the study .....	16
1.2.3	Limitations .....	18
1.2.4	Structure of the thesis .....	18
2	.Theoretical Focus and Literature Review .....	19
2.1	Law and policy support .....	19
2.2	Legislative framework for inclusive education in Bangladesh.....	22
2.3	Attitudes towards education for children with disabilities .....	31
3	. Methodological Views .....	34
3.1	Research design and method:.....	35
3.2	Research instruments:.....	36
3.2.1	Interviews .....	36
3.3	Sample and sampling procedures.....	38
3.3.1	Purposeful sampling: .....	38
3.3.2	Stakeholders qualification: .....	39
3.3.3	Pilot Study: .....	41
3.3.4	Data collection .....	41
3.3.5	Validity and reliability.....	42
3.4	Results (analyze and discussion).....	43
3.5	Ethics and confidentiality .....	45
4	. Data Presentation and Result Discussion .....	46
4.1	Need new laws .....	46
4.2	Policy is not sufficient/Discriminated education policy.....	48
4.3	Charity not rights- based.....	49

4.4	Not favour of inclusion.....	51
4.5	Social system is not disabled friendly .....	52
5	.Conclusions and Implications .....	54
5.1	Conclusions.....	54
5.2	Implications.....	59
5.2.1	Implications for future study.....	59
5.3	Recommendation:.....	60
5.3.1	Self reflection.....	64
	References.....	65
	Appendix.....	73

# List of tables

Table 1: Percentages of People with Disability PWDs by Age (1991 Census)

Table 2: Laws and Regulations on Disability

Table 3: Stakeholders Qualification

Table 4: First Conclusion

Table 5: Second Conclusion

Table 6: Third Conclusion

Table 7: Forth Conclusion

Table 8: Fifth Conclusion



# 1 .Introduction

According to World Health Organization, there are approximately 14 million disabled people living in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi government signed many national and international resolutions concerning disabilities. This research paper is about the stakeholders' awareness about these laws. To build a disabled-friendly society, we need positive attitudes from stakeholders as a whole. That is why first we have to be sure how much they are aware and care for the community of disabled people in Bangladesh.

This paper is divided into five sections. The first chapter presents an overview of the country of Bangladesh, where the research was conducted. A brief summary about the nation such as the education system in general and education for children with disabilities in particular will be introduced. The second chapter presents the literature review about the national and international laws about disability. The third chapter is about methodology used by the researcher. In fourth and fifth chapters, the findings and the conclusion of the study are discussed. The problem, objectives, scope and other aspects of the study will also be clarified.

## 1.1 Bangladesh – an overview

### 1.1.1 General information

Bangladesh is a developing country in South Asia positioned between 20°34' to 26°38' north longitude and 88°01' to 92°42' east latitude, with a region of 147,570 sq km ([www.moef.gov.bd/html/env\\_bangladesh/env\\_origin.html](http://www.moef.gov.bd/html/env_bangladesh/env_origin.html)). "Bangladesh" is a combination of the Bengali words Bangla and Desh, meaning the country or land where the Bangla language is spoken. Situated on the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh shares large borders with India and a small southern boundary with Myanmar. The Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers meet in Bangladesh to form the world's largest delta. Extremely fertile, yet vulnerable to floods and cyclones, this low-lying country supports a population of around 150 million people. Nearly 40 per cent of the population consists of children, living in an area of 55,813 square miles. In fact, Bangladesh is the most densely populated nation in the world. The population growth rate has declined, but it is still expected to rise to 181 million people by 2015. The majority of the population (98 percent) is Bengali, with 2 percent belonging to tribal or other non-

Bengali groups. Approximately 83 percent of the population is Muslim, 16 percent is Hindu, and 1 percent is Buddhist, Christian, or other. The annual population growth rate is at about 2 percent.

Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of illiteracy in the world. There is some gender disparity, though, as literacy rates are 62% among men and 51% among women, according to a 2008 UNICEF estimate. Since primary school education was declared compulsory in 1991, school enrolment has been rising, with 86 per cent of primary-school-aged girls and 85 per cent of primary school-aged boys enrolled in 2009. Secondary school enrolment rate is 45 per cent (Male) and 49 per cent (Female). Among the most successful literacy programs are the Food for Education (FFE), introduced in 1993, and a stipend program for women at the primary and secondary levels. (Nicholas, Marta and Philip, 2006).

#### **Bangladesh in Map**





Bangladesh has achieved remarkable success in enrolment in primary education as a result of the government's supply of free books and other initiatives. Even so, 50% of children drop out before they complete primary education. According to research by Save the Children, attending school is difficult for working children, children with disabilities, children of very poor families, ethnic minority and indigenous communities, and those living in remote areas. The teacher to student ratio in Bangladesh is around 1 to 47.

Being a signatory to the World Declaration on "Education for All" in March 1990, Bangladesh has enacted a law for Universal Compulsory Primary Education (UPE) in order to free the nation from the curse of illiteracy within the shortest possible time. Accordingly, the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has taken some policy decisions and has prepared a National Plan of Action (NPA) to make education available for all by the year 2000. The target population includes children of 6-10 years old, education in literacy, numeracy and life skills for all adolescents (aged 11-14), and youths and adults by the terminal year of its 20 year perspective plan (1990-2010). In order to supplement the Government approach, other development partners, especially NGOs, are also encouraged to participate, particularly in Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE).

### **1.1.2 Education system**

Education is now recognized as a basic human right, the need and significance of which has been emphasized on the common platform of the United Nations, through the medium of various Covenants and Treaties. It is also being seen as an instrument of social change; hence education leads to empowerment which is very important for a country like Bangladesh.

The present education system of Bangladesh may be broadly divided into three major levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Primary level institutions impart primary education basically. Junior secondary/secondary and higher secondary level institutions impart secondary education. Degree pass, degree honours, masters and other higher-level institutions or equivalent section of other related institutions impart tertiary education. The education system is operationally categorized into two streams: primary education (Grade I-V) managed by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME). The other system is the post-primary education, which covers all other levels from junior secondary to higher education under the administration of the Ministry of Education (MOE). The post-primary stream of education is further classified into four types in terms of curriculum: general

education, madrasah education, technical-vocational education and professional education. The first level of education is comprised of 5 years of formal schooling (class / grades I - V). Education at this stage normally begins at 6+ years of age up to 11 years. Primary education is generally imparted in primary schools. Nevertheless, other types of institutions like kindergartens and junior sections attached to English medium schools are also conducting it. The second level of education is comprised of 7 (3+2+2) years of formal schooling. The first 3 years (grades VI-VIII) is referred to as junior secondary; the next 2 years (grades IX -X) are secondary; the last 2 years (grades XI - XII) are called higher secondary. There is diversification of courses after three years of schooling in junior secondary level. Vocational and technical courses are offered in vocational and trade institute/schools. Moreover, there are high schools where S.S.C. (vocational) courses have been introduced.

In secondary education, there are three streams of courses such as Humanities, Science and Business Education, which start at class IX, where the students are free to choose their course(s) of studies. High schools are managed either by government or private individuals or organizations. Most of the privately managed secondary schools provide co-education. However, there are many single-sex institutions in secondary level education. The academic programme terminates at the end of class X when students are to appear at the public examination called S.S.C. (Secondary School Certificate). The secondary education is designed to prepare the students to enter into the higher secondary stage.

In higher secondary stage, the course is of a two-year duration (XI - XII), which is offered by Intermediate Colleges or by intermediate section of degree or master colleges.

Education Systems in Bangladesh are managed and administered by two Ministries: the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) in association with the associated departments and directorates, as well as a number of autonomous bodies.

Bangladesh is committed to the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtein, March 1990) and the Convention on the Right of Children (New York, September 1990). Recognizing the importance of primary and non-formal education in ensuring education for all and eradicating illiteracy, the Government created a new Division called Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) in August 1992. This Division is now operating as a Ministry. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is responsible for

policy formulation, planning, evaluation and execution of plans and initiating legislative measures relating to primary and non-formal education.

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE): This Directorate controls, coordinates and regulates the field administration of the primary education. The Directorate of Primary Education was created in 1981 with a view to giving full attention to primary education as an independent organization. The Director-General heads it. Under this Directorate there are 6 Divisional (regional) Officers, 64 District Offices and 481 Thana Offices.

National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE): This is an apex institution for training and research in the field of primary education, which is headed by a Director and governed by a Board of Governors headed by the Secretary, PMED. There are 53 'Governing bodies' and 1 private Primary Training Institute. They offer 1-year Certificate-in-Education course to teachers of primary schools.

Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE): A Directorate was created in 1995 with the responsibility of the execution of policy decisions and plans relating to non-formal education. The Non-Formal Education Programmes were then implemented through (a) NGO run centre-based literacy programme and (b) total literacy movement by the District/Thana administration. This Directorate has been abolished and started functioning as Bureau of Non-Formal Education.

Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit: After the enactment of Primary Education (Compulsory) Act of 1990, the Government created the Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit in 1991, headed by the Director-General with the responsibility to monitor the compulsory primary education programme at the field level and conduct a child-survey to collect information on the numbers of primary school-age population and children attending school. (BANBEIS, 2011).

In Bangladesh, only education at the primary level is compulsory and provided free of charge. For secondary education, tuition is collected from students. The Government sets the amount for all public schools. Currently, the tuition ranges from Bangladesh Taka (BDT) 10-15 (equivalent of US\$ 0.14-0.22) for junior secondary and from BDT 15-40 (equivalent of US\$ 0.22-0.58) for secondary and higher secondary schools. With the exception of a limited number of fully private schools in urban areas that collect a relatively high rate of tuition fees,

the majority of government-aided private institutions collect tuition amounts similar to public institutions. Fully private institutions, however, set their rates independently, and the amount tends to be expensive.

### **1.1.3 Children with disabilities**

#### **Definition of Disability in Bangladesh**

The Bangladeshi Parliament adopted its first comprehensive disability legislation, the Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001, on April 2001. It includes the following definition and identification of persons with disability:

- I. "Disability" means any person who,
  - a. is physically crippled either congenitally or as result of disease or being a victim of accident, or due to improper or maltreatment or for any other reasons became physically incapacitated or mentally imbalanced, and
  - b. as a result of such crippledness or mental impairedness,-
    - i. has become incapacitated, either partially or fully; and
    - ii. is unable to lead a normal life.
- II. Any person having disability described hereunder shall be included in the meaning and scope of the definition under subsection (I) of this section.
  - a. "Visual impaired" means any person who has,-
    - i. No vision in any single eye, or
    - ii. in both the eyes, or
    - iii. visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellen) in the better eye even with correcting lenses; or
    - iv. limitation of the 'field of vision' subtending an angle of 20° (degree) or worse;
  - b. Physically handicapped refers to person who has, -
    - i. lost either one or both the hands, or
    - ii. lost sensation, partly or wholly, of either hand, or it is so weaker in normal condition that the situations stated under subsection I (a) and (b) are applicable to his case; or
    - iii. lost either one or both the feet, or

- iv. lost sensation, partly or wholly, of either or both the feet, or it is so weaker in normal condition that the situations stated under subsection I (a) and (b) are applicable to his case; or
- v. has physical deformity and abnormality, or
- vi. has permanently lost physical equilibrium owing to neuro-disequilibrium; or
- c. has "hearing impairment" meaning one's loss of hearing capacity in better ear in the conversation range of frequencies at 40 decibels (hearing unit) or more, or damaged or ineffective otherwise; or
- d. has "speech impairment" meaning loss of one's capacity to utter/ pronounce meaningful vocabulary sounds, or damaged, partly or wholly, or dysfunctional; or
- e. has "mental disability" meaning,-
  - i. one whose mental development is not at par with his chronological age or whose IQ (Intelligent Quotient) is far below the normal range, or
  - ii. has lost mental balance or is damaged, partly or wholly; or
- f. has multiple disabilities, that is one who suffers from more than one type of above stated impairments; or
- g. any other type of impairment to be defined and declared by the Coordination Committee.

There are many definitions of impairment, disability and handicap. Several researchers have also shown that the concept of disability, including the way people report causes of disabilities, vary across cultures. For examples, a common perception in “Western” societies such as America, is that disabilities are caused by medical factors, whereas people in Southeast Asia sometimes think of disabilities as a punishment for bad moral behavior in a previous life (Bergstad and Granli,2004; Kim et al.,2001)

Bangladesh is a full member of the World Health Organization (WHO). It is also presently a member of the WHO Executive Board. Bangladesh has adopted the WHO definitions and classification of disability considering these definitions and classification most relevant and consistent with the country situation.

## **Disability Situation**

Though disability is a major social and economic phenomenon in Bangladesh, there is reliable data in this regard is difficult to obtain to reveal the actual number of disabled persons.

However, it is assumed that the prevalence of disability in Bangladesh is not less than the WHO estimation for the developing countries.

Discretely performed by different agencies, available studies are either localized or issue-specific. Lack of precise definition/conception of disability and the variation of professional mechanism for identification of their severity, the available surveys portray widely differing pictures. The GOB surveys in 1982, 1986 and 1998 estimated national prevalence rate of disability at 0.64%, 0.5% and 1.6% respectively.

Action Aid-Bangladesh and SARPV (Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable) put the disabled persons at 8.8% of the total population. Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS) and Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS) reported it as 7.8%. In a report for the Aid Management Office (AMOD) of the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) and for the British Government, the figure was cited as 9 million, of which no less than 7 million live in the rural areas. Most estimates generally appear to be underrated, sometimes grossly. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported a global estimate about 10%. Knowledgeable sources believe that the prevalence is above 10% and it is more extensive in the rural areas.

Interestingly, information on the field of disability has been included for the first time in the country's National Census format that was conducted in 2001. The final report of that Census is yet to be published. Still there is a lot of confusion about how that report would focus the disability situation because the data collectors had no orientation on disability and they didn't get sufficient time to collect complete information in this regard. It is said that the census workers did not interview about 50% or more persons with disabilities of the country. However, from the available data and information from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS 1998), based on health and medical perspective, proportional prevalence of disability/impairment of different categories at all ages are as follows: Type of Disability/impairment:- Visual Prevalence:- 31.3% Type of Disability/impairment:- Physical Prevalence:- 27.5% Type of Disability/impairment:- Hearing and Speech Prevalence:- 28% Type of Disability/impairment:- Mental Prevalence:- 4.9% Type of Disability/impairment:- Leprosy and Goiter Prevalence:- 8.3% Total:- 100%.

It is very difficult to elaborate the major causes of disability in Bangladesh. Most of those causes are congenital and unknown. Commonly the incidences of disability occur before, during, and after birth. The major known causes of disabilities could be categorized as follows: --Lack of Awareness --Wrong/mal-treatment --Poverty Attack of wild animals --Mal-Nutrition --Marriage between blood --Infectious and other diseases relatives. --Environmental

Pollution --Accidents and violence --Forced Delivery -- Birth Complications --Natural Disasters etc. Children With Disabilities (CWDs) are one among the most vulnerable groups in Bangladesh.

A large number of children under five years old die every year due to tetanus, acute respiratory infections, pneumonia, diarrhea and malnutrition in the country. Among them, the number of children with disabilities is significant. Children with disabilities (CWDs) become the first victim of discrimination by others. In the family, they are not usually provided with same food, clothing, shelter and care as their peers. The family usually ignores their needs, especially health and educational. As a result, they are deprived of their basic rights to education, health, participation and recreation. Many times, the others also abuse CWDs. (Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, 2005).

**Table 1. Percentages of People with Disability by Age (1991 Census)**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-4	5.9	4.1	5.2
5-9	9.7	9.8	9.8
10-14	10.2	9.5	9.9
15-19	5.4	6.6	5.9
20-24	6.6	6.5	6.6
25-29	5.4	6.2	5.8
30-34	5.9	3.1	4.8
35-39	4.9	4.9	4.9
40-44	5.4	4.5	5
45-49	5.3	4.4	5
50-54	5.6	4.5	5.2
55-59	5	4	4.6
60-64	6.8	6.9	6.8
65+	18	24.9	20.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS)

### **Education for children with disabilities:**

Access for children with disabilities to education in Bangladesh is extremely limited. An unequal educational system, a rigid and unfriendly education curriculum, a lack of awareness of parents, compounded by the inadequate knowledge of teachers and the unfriendly environment existing in most of the institutions, have done very little to promote education of

children with disabilities in Bangladesh. With regard to special education, the government is operating 13 primary schools for people with disabilities; seven schools for those with hearing impairment, five for visually impaired people, and one school for those with intellectual disabilities.

Private voluntary organizations are also involved in institution-based educational rehabilitation through five schools for children with hearing impairment, one for those with visual impairment, and three schools for those with intellectual disabilities, along with their branches in different districts. At the high school level, the government is running 64 integrated programs attached to regular schools, while private voluntary development organizations are operating a number of schools each for those with visual and hearing impairments. The total number of children enrolled in special and integrated education programs is estimated to be far below 5,000.

In terms of manpower in special education, 15 postgraduate teachers are trained each year through the Department of Special Education, all in Dhaka University. Several other teachers' training programs are also being offered by other private voluntary NGOs. The government has also developed a National Centre for Special Education, and it is likely that there will be a significant increase in the numbers of teachers trained in special education.

With all these efforts combined, only 4 percent of children with disabilities within the primary school-going age have so far been enrolled in education. Bangladesh has two independent ministries catering to education -- the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education -- which are striving to meet the goal of "Education for all by 2015". Yet education of children with disabilities is under the purview of the Ministry of Social Welfare, which plays no part to achieve the universal goal. Among the staggering 96 percent of the children with disabilities who are still out of education, a major portion (70%) could have been enrolled in the regular national education program with very little effort. This could be brought under a planned Inclusive Education Program. The remaining 30 per cent could be enrolled under Integrated and Special Education Programs. Yet this has not happened.

The second phase of the national Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-II) has recently included the issue upon insistence of NFOWD and under the pressure from its donors. (Rahman. Nafeesur, 2004). It is mentioned in the PEDP base line survey that a total of 45,680 students with mild disability are enrolled in primary school, of whom 25,833 are boys



and 19,847 are girls. Only a small number of schools (less than 1%) were reported to have accessibility for the students with physical disabilities. (Akermann & Huq, 2005). A study pointed out that girls with disabilities are at high risk of emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Fears of such abuse often discourage the parents from sending their daughters to school. (CSID, 2004).

A study conducted by the Directorate of Primary Education in 2001-2002, with support from Department for International Development (DFID) and technical support from the Cambridge consortium found that more boys with disabilities are enrolled in schools than girls and also confirmed that girls who did enroll were subject to physical, emotional and sexual abuse (Nasreen & Tate, 2007).

The Bangladeshi government has declared "Education for all by the year 2000" and has been trying to attain this goal through its formal and non-formal education systems. In Bangladesh, the agencies working for persons with disabilities have generally been implementing the following five types of Education Programs:

1. Special Education Program: Separate education in specialized class (es) of specialized school/institutions.
2. Home-based Education Program: Mobile Education system for children with disabilities through specially trained teachers
3. Integrated Education Program: Education for students with disabilities under the mainstream system, but with some with special arrangements
4. Distance Education Program: Distance learning system using multimedia including the conventional print materials
5. Inclusive Education Program: Comprehensive integrated (open) education system without special arrangements for disabled students. A few NGOs have started inclusive education in their non-formal education programs.

All five systems of education are practiced in Bangladesh, with special emphasis on special education for students with intellectual disabilities. An inclusive education system has not yet been fully achieved.

## **Education Program for Persons with Hearing Impairments**

For the hearing impaired, the Government of Bangladesh manages 7 schools throughout the country. The government undertook the National Complex for Special Education with assistance from the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD). At present there are 33 Special Schools for persons with hearing impairment. Seven are under government management, with a total capacity of 1,500 students. There is only one education center at the secondary level. The Bangladesh Deaf and Dumb Federation, a private development agency, has 3 institutions in the large cities. Another NGO, HICARE, has established schools for the hearing impaired in different parts of the country. The Society for Assistance to Hearing Impaired Children (SAHIC) started a pre-schooling program in 1992. Two International NGOs, the Salvation Army and World Concern, have also been running school education programs for the hearing impaired since 1988. Another NGO, Disabled Rehabilitation & Research Association (DRRA), is also working for persons with hearing impairments. VHSS has been working to integrate hearing impaired children in to normal school programs through advocacy and lobbying.

## **Education Program for Persons with Mental Disability**

The Social Service Department of Bangladesh has been operating a National Center for Special Education (NCSE) in the capital city Dhaka. NCSE runs education and training programs for persons with mental, visual and hearing disabilities. In 1977, some parents and social workers established the Society for the Care and Education of the Mentally Retarded Bangladesh (SCEMRB). The organization is presently known as the Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled, Bangladesh (SWID Bangladesh). SWID Bangladesh operates 38 branches nationwide. The National Special Education and Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation operate several institutions for the education of children with mental disabilities in Bangladesh.

## **Educational Program for Persons with Visual Impairment**

The Rotary Club of Dhaka launched an institution for persons with visual impairment in 1957 with technical assistance from Helen Keller International (HKI). Two types of education systems for the visually impaired are in operation. They are the Special Education and Integrated Education systems. Under the Special Education system, there are 7 schools (5 in

the public sector), which conduct education programs for persons with visual impairment. Public sector schools are set up in 5 divisional towns out of 6 administrative divisions in the country, each with a capacity of about 500 students. Two other special schools, the Baptist Mission Blind Girls School and Salvation Army Home for the Blind, are residential institutions operated by NGOs. Both government and NGOs operate integrated education programs for students and children with visual impairments. The government runs the Integrated Education System in 64 districts of the country, while NGOs operate 5 other schools. However, there is a dearth of education inputs/materials such as Braille books, Braille writing frames and syllabi, qualitative/standard papers for writing in Braille, boards for arithmetical/mathematical teaching/learning and white canes. For all of the aforementioned reasons and, more importantly, because of the lack of skilled teachers, the systems' benefits have not been realized. Under the Ministry of Education, the Government has formed a Special Committee with the representatives of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and UNESCO to promote education of disabled children in regular schools. (JICA, 2002).

#### **1.1.4 Inclusive education**

Inclusive education is currently one of the most discussed educational topics all over the world. The world has achieved a number of Declarations and Agreements in favour of inclusive society for all as an output of inclusive education. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948; the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966; the UN Convention Against Discrimination in Education 1960; Declarations on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons 1971; the Rights of Disabled Persons 1975; International Year of Disabled Persons 1981; Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child-CRC 1989; the UNESCO Declaration on Education For All (EFA) 1990; and the Salamanca Declaration on Inclusive Education 1994. These international documents acted as prime mover for education systems of different countries towards inclusive education (Florin & Florin, 1998).

'Inclusive education' is very much focused in human rights declarations which mention that every child has an equal right to be enrolled in the local regular school and to receive the same type of education as their peers (Bunch & Valeo, 2004). In the true meaning of the term, inclusive education means that every child is warmly received and considered a contributing

member of the family and society and every individual's developmental activities are facilitated by manipulating the environment and providing children opportunities to apply their full capabilities (Stainback & Stainback, Halvorsen & Sailor, Forest & Pearpoint, Villa, Thousand, Ayres, Yell cited in Bradley et al., 1997). Moreover, inclusion is not an educational system or a legal phrase; rather, it is an educational philosophy to reform the existing teaching-learning methods of regular or special educational settings (Inos & Freagon in Walker & Ovington, 1998). However, it is clear from the literature that there is an absence of a sound universal definition for inclusive education. (Tariq, 2011)

Different countries and agencies have functional definitions of inclusive education in different ways, but the meanings of these definitions are very similar; UNESCO (2001) defines inclusive education as follows:

*schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic population, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups. (in Aniftos, 2004: 4)*

In the US, Phi Delta Kappa's Centre for Evaluation, Development and Research (1993) provided a definition of inclusion which suggests strategies for implementing inclusive education: Inclusion is a term which expresses commitment to educating each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services) and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students). Proponents of inclusion generally favour newer forms of education service delivery. Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of handicapping condition or severity, will be in a regular classroom/program full time. All services must be taken to the child in that setting. (Wisconsin Education Association Council-WEAC, 2001: 1-2)

In the UK, CSIE (2002) defines inclusive education as:

*all children and young people with and without disabilities or difficulties - learning together in ordinary pre-school provision, schools, colleges and universities with appropriate network of support. Inclusion means enabling all students to participate fully in the life and work of mainstream settings, whatever their needs. (CSIE, 2002: 1)*

Typically, inclusive education means "that students with disabilities are served primarily in the general education settings, under the responsibility of [a] regular classroom teacher. When necessary and justifiable, students with disabilities may also receive some of their instruction in another setting, such as resource room" (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2004, p.7).

In spite of the Ministry of Primary Education, also known as the minister of social welfare, the department of social services is the responsible agency for the education of the children with disability and has been since the 1960's. Students without disabilities have access to different types of schooling under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). MoPME is fully responsible for Government Primary school (GPS). On the other hand, Registered Non Government Primary Schools (RNGPS) and community schools, for which the government is partly responsible, make up a suitable proportion on the 11 different types of primary schools in Bangladesh, enrolling almost 18 million students (DPE, 2009).

Principles of inclusive education are increasingly the topic for discussion, but very limited education opportunities for children with special needs remain a major source of inequity and deprivation in education (Khan 2002). In a recent survey, it was found that 9 percent of the children who never enrolled in school mentioned disability as the cause and two percent of who dropped out noted it as a cause. In another survey, Khan (2002) found that 44 percent of the disabled children were in the age group in 6-10 years and mere 11 per cent of children with disabilities had gained access to education. In 72 percent of cases, parents faced problems while enrolling their children with disabilities in school.

The few government- supported integrated schools are residential, where the scope of enrollment is limited. The situation of girls is worse than for boys. In regular schools, no classroom adaptations were made in the case of 83% of the pupils with disabilities. Braille books are not available in sufficient numbers, even though the government has a Braille press and the policy is to provide free textbooks in Braille to children with visual impairments. No common sign language is in use in Bangla, so communication is difficult for children with hearing and speech impairments. The primary school teachers in general do not have the minimum required knowledge and skills in handling pupils with disabilities. The curriculum of the Primary Teachers Training Institutes (PTIs) did not cover issues concerning disability. In fact, a chapter of the PTI curriculum expresses negative notions towards learners with disabilities. (Khan, 2002).

## **1.2 Statement of the research problem**

### **1.2.1 Research Problem:**

- To what extent are the stakeholders aware about the laws of Bangladesh concerning Special Needs Education and Inclusion?

### **Sub-questions to research problems:**

- How much are the stakeholders aware about the laws relating education in Bangladesh?
- What are their perceptions about the adequacy of the existing laws of Bangladesh to meet the educational needs of children with special needs?
- What recommendations and policy guidelines can be suggested for the children with special needs for inclusion?

### **1.2.2 Significance of the study**

#### **Research Context**

Persons with disabilities are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged section of the society and often are subjected to discrimination and negative attitudes in Bangladesh. The estimated number of persons with disabilities is around 14 million people, which constitutes 10% of its total population (Faruque, 2008).

Most of the persons with disabilities are often deprived of basic needs including health care, housing, education, employment and other opportunities. For these reasons, an effective legal system is necessary for preserving the rights of disable persons in Bangladesh. The most important law in our country on disabilities is the Disabled Welfare Act 2001, which is not sufficient to deal with the rights of the disabled persons.

It is known that the law is a very powerful tool for legal protection of any person and this is also true for the disable persons. This paper mainly focuses on those who are not able to deal

with all situations from some physical or mental lacking as well as comparative legal protection thereof. (Zelina Sultana, 2010).

The focus of this study will be the laws about education and will especially concentrate on the children with special needs. The researcher reviewed the available policy documents, literature, and websites to gather information from regional and international organizations and networks on relevant issues and about how much the stakeholders know about these laws. The current research was carried out in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh and center of all activities of the country. For example, most of the national and international organizations are working from Dhaka. Therefore, Dhaka is the best case scenario for conducting my research.

### **Objectives:**

The purpose of the study was to introduce a pilot model for collecting and implementing stakeholders' input into setting research priorities about the awareness of the laws of special children. The general objective of the study is to evaluate the existing laws and policies in Bangladesh for the welfare of children with special needs and provide some suggestions regarding this issue.

The specific objectives of this paper are:

- To examine the relevant policies of the government addressing the requirements of Children with Special Needs.
- To analyze shortfalls in existing education policies and implementation.
- To identify possible interventions for strengthening and promoting laws for children with special needs for inclusion.
- Review of existing literature on special needs education in general, as well as the review of studies conducted to date on Bangladesh on special needs education.
- Identify the research gaps in the literature on the study of special needs education in Bangladesh.

- Justify the need for this kind of research which would contribute to the addition of knowledge in the field of special education needs of Bangladesh.

### **1.2.3 Limitations**

It would be difficult to generalize the findings because the sample size is very small: Due to the fact that the time was the binding constraint, the researcher had no choice but to select only 8 stakeholders for the interview.

This is an unexplored area of research and as a result, the researcher had to work from scratch, and cannot make use of previous research. The researcher did not find any previous research in this field from which she could compare.

Gender-biased society: It was difficult to conduct interviews because Bangladesh is a gender-biased society similar as other South Asian countries. People do not want to talk with a woman about important issues like special needs education, and as a result, it was difficult to collect information from the different sources.

Very few wanted to talk about the children with special needs: Special education is a very sensitive issue so most people do not want to talk about it.

Also, time constraints were one of the limitations of the research.

### **1.2.4 Structure of the thesis**

Thesis is written in 5 chapters. Each of the chapters deals with one specific part which contributes to build up a picture of the awareness of the stakeholders about the laws of special education. In chapter 1, a general overview of Bangladesh where the research was conducted and brief information for carrying out the study is described. Chapter 2 deals with the conceptual and theoretical framework. Chapter 3 presents the methodological views and summarizes the data collection process. Chapter 4 is the part of the thesis where all the data obtained are presented and analyzed. Lastly, chapter 5 concludes and discusses the significance findings of the study. Conclusions and perspectives about the phenomena studied are also in this chapter.



## 2 .Theoretical Focus and Literature Review

### Introduction

This chapter is a summary of the ideas concerning the laws of special education in national and international level.

### 2.1 Law and policy support

A child is a part of his or her system. A system is an ongoing process. According to Bronfenbrenner, there are four systems working together in our ecology. They are: Micro, Meso, Exo and Macrosystem. An exosystem consists of one or more settings that do not involve developing person as an active participant but in which events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in that setting. To demonstrate the operation of the exosystem as a factor influencing development, it is necessary to establish a causal sequence involving at least two steps: the first connecting events in the external setting into presses occurring in the developing person's microsystem and second linking the microsystem processes to developmental changes in a person within that setting. (Bronfenbrenner 1979, P 237).

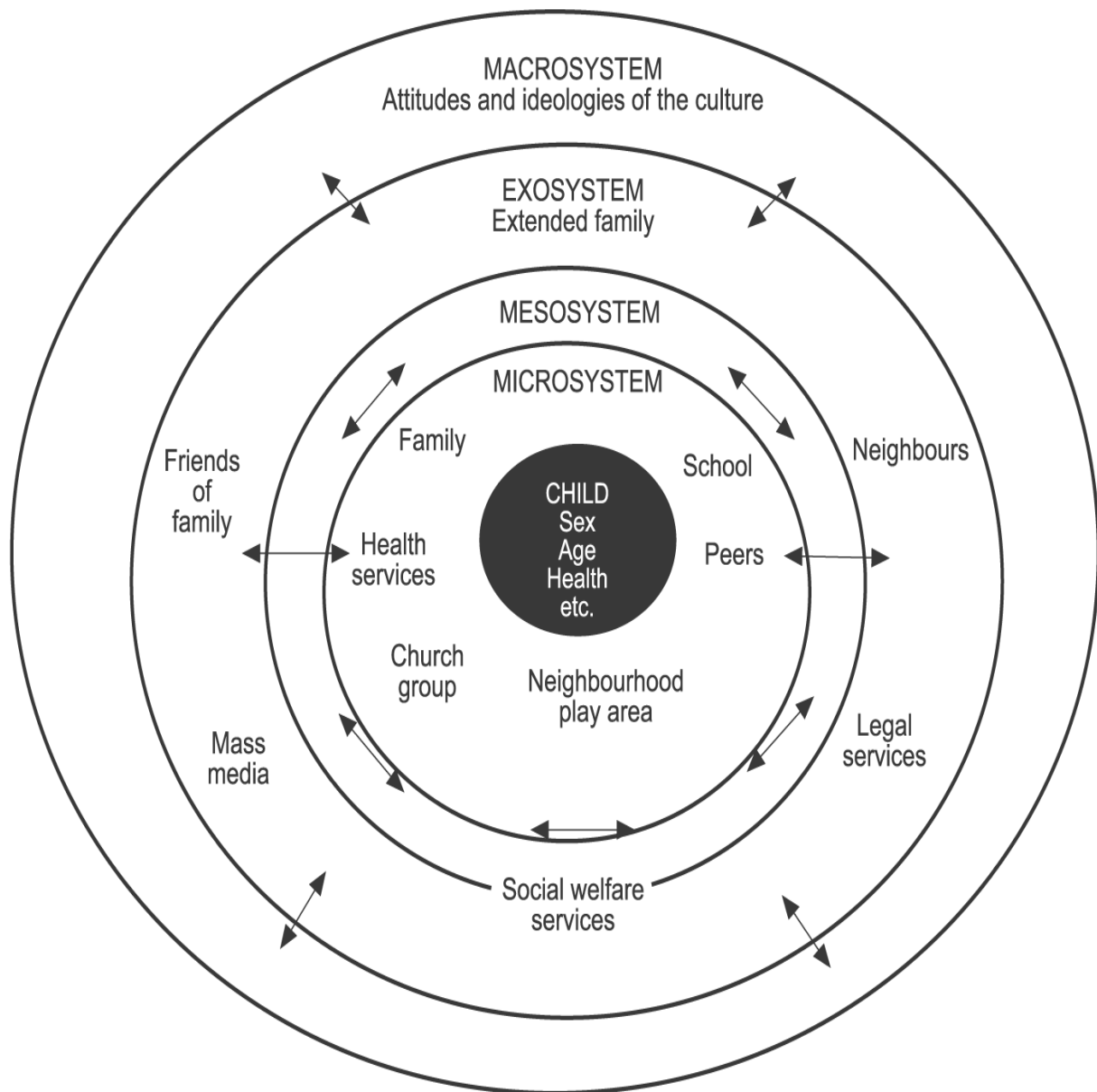
Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of an environment, each having an effect on a child's development. To study a child's development, we must then look not only at the child and his/her immediate environment, but also at the interaction of the larger environment as well.

The *macrosystem* – this layer may be considered the outermost layer in the child's environment. While not being a specific framework, this layer is comprised of cultural values, customs, and laws (Berk, 2000). The effects of larger principles defined by the macrosystem have a cascading influence throughout the interactions of all other layers. For some time the strategic direction for children with Special Educational Needs internationally has been centered on a commitment to the principle of inclusion "with a continuum of provision" being available in all local authorities to meet children's needs, for example, the Salamanca Agreement. The velocity towards an inclusive system and the nature of inclusion itself, however, has varied. The former has been shaped by resources, political will and professional

commitment. Also, ironically, it has been easier to develop more inclusive systems where the previous and existing systems were less well developed. (Dockrell & Messer, 1999)

### Child and his environment

#### Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



**Source:** Dockrell and Messer (1999, p. 139)

When we study child development, we have to look into his or her surroundings and how they affect them. Here we will talk about the law, which indirectly affects the child in every way. According to Bronfenbrenner ‘the problems students and families face are caused by the conflict between the workplace and family life – not between families and schools. Schools and teachers should work to support the primary relationship and to create an environment that welcomes and nurtures families.’ We can do this while we work to realize Bronfenbrenner’s ideal of the creation of public policy that eases the work/family conflict (Henderson, 1995). It is in the best interest of our entire society to lobby for political and economic policies that support the importance of parent’s roles in their children’s development. Bronfenbrenner would also agree that we should foster societal attitudes that value work done on behalf of children at all levels: parents, teachers, extended family, mentors, work supervisors, legislators. ( Dede & Ryan, 2001)

While talking about legislation and policies at first, I will discuss about the education policies of Bangladesh. The first ever education policy of Bangladesh is known as the Education Commission Report of 1974, which provided special education opportunity for children with special needs. However, the concept of special education was not clear to Bangladeshi educationists during that period, as religious education and physical education were also considered special education at that time.

In the Education Commission Report of 1988, special education was addressed properly but inclusive education was not yet familiar to policy makers (Ministry of Education, 1988). In 1990, Bangladesh signed the Education For All (EFA) Declaration (WECEFA) at Jomtein, Thailand and enacted a law known as the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990 for achieving EFA goals. Primary education was declared free for all children (Ahsan & Tonmoy, 2002). However, children with disabilities remained out of regular primary education because only special education provisions were suggested in the education policies, and education of disable children were not considered then within special education category.

In 1997, Bangladesh implemented a new education policy, and in that policy, the education of children with disabilities was described clearly (The Ministry of Education, 1997 in Ahsan & Tonmoy, 2002). Bangladesh does not have any database or survey results on the total number of people with disabilities and their types yet, so Bangladesh follows the World Health Organization’s (WHO) estimation that 10% of any given population have a disability (DPE & CSID, 2002).

A call for an education system that is inclusive and flexible with free access for all students without discrimination is stated in the world declaration on education for all (UNESCO, 1990) and then fiercely supported in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). The decision to respond to the call and develop inclusive educational models is ultimately a question of the policies and guiding regulation of any nation. As mentioned by UNESCO (2000), the key challenge is to ensure that the broad vision of education for all as an inclusive concept is reflected in national government and funding agency policies. It purports that laws, legislation, and policies at the national level provide the structure and framework within which local community and school can operate.

Suggestions from the Salamanca Statement is that based on its cultural, social and economic conditions, a nation should consider the highline under the universal framework to work out concrete principles of inclusion, integration and participation in its own education system. Educational policies at all levels are required to ensure the acceptance of individual differences and situations as well as the meaningful attendance of any child with a disability.

Policies should encourage the development of inclusive schools. Barriers that impede movement from special to regular schools should be removed and a common administrative structure should be organized. In addition, the exercise of parallel and complimentary legislative measures adopted in other related fields such as health, social welfare, financing arrangement, vocational training and employment is necessary to support and realize the full effects of educational legislation as well as facilitate the development of inclusion (Salamanca Statement. 15-23).

The constitutional guarantee of free education is gradually translated into governmental promises that education will be made free and thereby universal. In its reports under international human rights treaties, the government summarized in 1995 the constitutional guarantees of the right to education and training to include “every citizen’s right to free primary education”. It took five more years for the changing governments to announce that eight years of education would be made free for boys and ten years for girls. This is yet to be translated into practice.

## **2.2 Legislative framework for inclusive education in Bangladesh**

The constitution of Bangladesh has clearly spelled in article 28(3) that no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, caste, sex or place of birth be subject to any disability, liability, restriction, or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or admission to any educational institution.

In 1995 the first national policy of disability was approved by the government. An action plan to operationalize this policy was approved in 1996. The Bangladesh government has approved its 1st comprehensive disability policy in April, that year in the parliament, the Bangladesh Person with Disability Welfare Act 2001. The government formulated a national action plan on the 26th of September 2006. This action plan is very comprehensive, involving 46 ministries and divisions of government undertaking specific activities with persons with disabilities (Jahangir, 2008). The national education policies of 2009 all emphasize the education of disabled children (Ministry of Education, 2009).

The world has a number of Declarations and Agreements in favour of an inclusive society. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948; the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966; the UN Convention Against Discrimination in Education 1960; Declarations on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons 1971; the Rights of Disabled Persons 1975; International Year of Disabled Persons 1981; Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child-CRC 1989; The UNESCO Declaration on Education For All (EFA) 1990; and the Salamanca Declaration on Inclusive Education 1994. These international documents acted as prime driver for education systems of different countries towards inclusive education (Florin & Florin, 1998). Bangladesh is a signatory of these international declarations (Directorate of Primary Education- DPE & Centre for Services and Information on Disability-CSID, 2002). (Tariq Ahsan, 2011).

After achieving independence in 1971, the People's Republic of Bangladesh enacted its constitution in 1972, and it was revised in 2000 (The Ministry of Law Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2000). The Constitutional provision regarding education helped moving towards conceptualization of inclusive education. Part II of the Constitution describes education in the following way:

**Article 17:** The state shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of –  
*establishing a uniform, mass oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;*

Part III of the Constitution specifically mentions of non-discrimination in education as contained in **Article 28 (3)**–

*No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction, or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.*

**Article 28 (4)**–

*Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens. (Ministry of Law Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2000: 8).*

A survey was conducted about the awareness and knowledge about disability in Bangladesh (Mahmud & Hossain, 2005). Some of the findings are as follows; very few people have cursory knowledge about the issues relating to disability. While responding to the cause of disability, a majority blamed ‘*Congenital and birth problems as the principal cause of disability. About 17% express that the reason is a result of diseases and 16% claim the disability is a result of an accident. About 15% express their opinion as God’s will.*’

It is observed that 96.8 % people did not know whether there were initiatives taken by the policymakers or local government bodies, chairman, member etc, MP, Ministers for prevention of disability. 78.8 % individuals opined that they did not have any idea, whether disable people were getting help from any organization. Most of the respondents replied that the PWDs receive help from their own family. About 73 percent of them knew that PWDs did not get any health care facility. When asked, if ‘*social relation with disabled people is permissible, most of the participants would make friendships with the disabled but would never marry a disabled person.*’

Disabled persons should get extra security on the road, such as a reserved seat in the public transport like bus, train etc., separate hospital, health centre, and in schools. These are the attitudes that should prevail in the society. According to one participant, even educated people treat disabled persons poorly. No one wants to make relationship with any disabled person. When asked whether disable people should be given extra preference, they were of the view that they should be given extra preference, *in which case government and rich persons should*

*come first.* One person expressed that disabled persons should get registered and then consider their problems and considering their abilities, receive extra preference. The government should provide employment opportunities and give extra facilities in social and other organizational fields. They should receive an opportunity to benefit from the free of cost schooling and priority in medical treatment. Disabled persons should not receive equal opportunity because they do have not equal quality like an able person.

Although countries all over the world have made laws relating to imparting of education, these laws have not been created in a vacuum. There exists various international commitments by way of convention, treaties etc., which have compelled governments all over the world to enact provisions relating to education and its establishment as a human right.

In Bangladesh, the Education Policy provides provision for “Education For All” and primary education is compulsory and free. Disabled children are left out of this program as their programme of education is seen as a welfare and charity issue. Under PEDP-II (Primary Education development project- II) it has been specified that in Primary schools, mildly disabled children would be enrolled, but unfortunately this does not happen in practice. There are no guidelines and tools to register disabled persons, such as sex, age, place, type or degree of disability.

The department of primary education does not have any program for screening the children in their settings, so even if someone wants to do something there is no information in the department either. This is one of the reasons the special children do not get the resources they need for their studies. There are some visual impaired children in the regular school but the primary education department does not admit this fact. ( Zaman and Nazma, P-118).

There should be free books from government for all the children but there are no Braille books for the VI children. There was a base line survey conducted for the low vision children in 2005 but till now there are no books for them. The government is yet to recognize sign language for hearing-impaired children. ( Zaman and Nazma, P-90)

Bangladesh did not have any laws to ensure the rights of people with disabilities until 2001, but it developed a National Disability Policy in 1997 which was implemented in Bangladesh, Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001 four years later (Ministry of Social Welfare, 2001). Part D of this Act discusses the educational rights of people with disabilities and proposes the

creation of opportunities for free education for all children with disabilities below 18 years of age.

People who still believe in special education state that inclusive education is ‘economically motivated’. Top (1996) argues that there is fear of insufficient funding, inadequate training of teachers, and crisis in teaching and other support materials in inclusive schools (Walker & Ovington, 1998). Conversely, others argue that inclusive education is appropriate only for children with slight to mild disabilities. Both professionals and parents of non-disabled children comment that children with severe disabilities might cause trouble in regular classrooms (Dorries & Haller, 2001). Followers of full inclusion do not support labeling disability (as this require predefining the child’s abilities after measuring their degree of disability) and this may misrepresent the child’s potential (Gallagher, 2001). However, Hallahan & Kauffman (1994) argue that labeling is necessary, as it not cause the problem; it is the belief of a society about labeling that cause the problem (in Gallagher, 2001). It would appear that people’s attitudes towards inclusive education can be a barrier to this new reform. (Tariq, 2011).

**Table 2: Laws and Regulations on Disability**

Title	Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001
Legislative Year	2001
Purpose	Equal opportunities and provision of benefits to Persons with Disabilities
<b>【Description】</b>  Ensures quality of opportunities and provides other benefits, facilities and privileges to persons with disabilities.	

Title	National Policy concerning disabled persons
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Legislative Year	1995
Purpose	A compilation of policies to ensure all rights and facilities for persons with disabilities
<b>【Description】</b>  Includes fourteen chapters on prevention, detection and intervention, early intervention, assistive devices, education, rehabilitation, HRD, employment, research, accessibility and facilities for movement, information, recreation, self-help movement and implementation and coordination	
Title	Draft Legislation on equal opportunity, rights and full participation of the disabled persons
Legislative Year	1997
Purpose	An instrument for implementing the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities
<b>【Description】</b>  An outcome of the coordinated efforts of the organizations and agencies working in the field of disability in Bangladesh, the coordinator of which is the National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD).  Includes thirty two-chapters on the title, definition, prevention, detection, inter-education, education for persons with severe disability and overlapping, role of the government, health services and rehabilitation, rehabilitation center, HRD, employment, research, accessibility and facilities for movement, information, recreation, organization for service and person with overlapping, social (and properties) security, different roles of the government, strengthening self-help organizations, welfare organizations for persons with disabilities, registration certificates, National Coordination Committee, Directorate concerning disabled persons, implementation and coordination, etc.	

Title	Constitution of Bangladesh
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Legislative Year	1972
Purpose	Equal rights and opportunities.
<b>【Description】</b>  Promises to give Persons with Disabilities equal rights and opportunities.	

### **Policies on Disability:**

National Development plan:

Title	Fifth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002)
Legislated Year	1997
<b>【Items regarding PWD】</b>  No items on persons with disabilities, but a few references to “the most vulnerable people,” which may include persons with disabilities.	

(JICA, 2002)

### **Efforts by the Government**

- In 1993, the government of Bangladesh set up a National Coordination Committee on Disability under the Ministry of Social Welfare.
- The government of Bangladesh also formulated the National Policy on Disabilities and approved by the Cabinet Ministry in 1995, outlining the guidelines for the prevention, identification, education, rehabilitation, research and management of national programs for the welfare of PWDs.

- An Action Plan on Disability was approved by the government in 1996 for implementation of programs, activities, strategies, and duties of concern for PWDs but had not yet implemented most of the activities defined in that Action Plan.
- The government has approved legislation concerning the welfare of the disabled persons named "Disability Welfare Act-2001" in April 2001.
- The National Foundation for the Development of Disabled Person (NFDDP) has been established and started working in 2000 under the Ministry of Social Welfare.
- The government has already taken an initiative and declared loan facilities and a 10% quota for disabled people in government employment at the 8th National Parliament Assembly of the First Session 2004.
- The Task force on Disability in Bangladesh has approved the National Action Plan for the Development of disabled persons.
- In addition, the government of Bangladesh formed a 19 member task force on disability issues on 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2002 headed by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare, and the government of Bangladesh. Members of the committee are from the Ministry of Establishment, Finance; Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs; Primary and Mass Education; Housing and Works; Communication, Health and Family Welfare; Local Government and Rural Development; Women and Children Affairs; Youth and Sports; Director General Department of Social Services; the Managing Director, National Foundation for the Development of Disabled Persons; and seven representatives of National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) including DPO's representative.
- The government of Bangladesh gave the task force the assignment to formulate an Action Plan based on the Disability Welfare Act 2001 and the National Policy on Disability of 1995.
- The Prime Minister's Short term and long term development plan for the people with Disabilities of March 07, 2002.

- The main objective of the Action Plan was to formulate a process to share responsibility for the development of the people with disabilities by different ministries.
- The task force, in its meeting held on the 18th August 2004, approved the draft of the Action Plan unanimously. The Action Plan will be placed before the National Coordination Committee for the People with Disabilities in Bangladesh and then before the Cabinet for final approval.
- Moreover the National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD), its member organizations and the people with disabilities expressed their happiness and urged the government to approve the Action Plan as soon as possible.
- It is to be mentioned here that on 13th May 2004, Prime Minister of Bangladesh announced in a gathering of disabled persons to approve the Action Plan soon.

### **NGO Activities:**

In Bangladesh, there are several thousands of NGOs that have been working in different sectors of development. However, the number of NGOs working in disability and development is not significant.

The total number of NGOs is only about 200 that have been formed and managed by disabled persons or have been working for the disabled persons or disability. Among those, the number of organizations working exclusively for disabled persons and the organizations comprised of and managed by the disabled persons is not more than 10. There are very few among those NGO's formed and managed by a very limited number of PWDs

Most of these organizations are urban-based and the number of PWDs at the management level is the same as above. In the other organizations there are no PWDs in the management level and even the PWD beneficiaries do not have access to participation in their need assessment, policy development, decision-making, and implementation of their programs. Basically, NGOs provide their services in the capacity of awareness raising, training, education and providing health care services. Some NGOs are operating credit programs among their beneficiaries.

Action Aid Bangladesh recently conducted a survey on NGO's working in the field of disability. 68% are working at the grass-roots level and 24% at the national level. 47% are working with the Community Based Rehabilitation approach, 12% with an Institution Based Rehabilitation approach and 41 % follow both approaches.

The NGOs' five most common areas of specialization are: training, education, awareness raising, and disability prevention and medical rehabilitation.

The NGOs' five most common areas of specialization are: training, education, awareness raising, and disability prevention and medical rehabilitation. There are very few NGOs that have clinical facilities for treatment and rehabilitation of disabled persons. Among these few are The Leprosy Mission, Damien Foundation, Santi Handicapped Center, Pangu Shishu Niketon, Society for Assistance to Hearing Impaired Children (SAHIC), Bangladesh National Society for the Blind (BNSB), Impact foundation Bangladesh, and Center for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP). CRP provides treatment and rehabilitation training to the paraplegic patients, which confines its services only towards the spinal cord injured patients.

## **2.3 Attitudes towards education for children with disabilities**

The concept of attitude may not be so easy to define in concrete terms owing to its abstract nature. Nevertheless, some definitions of attitude have been explored. Gall, Gall and Borg (1996) defined attitude as an individual's view point or disposition towards a particular object, person or an idea.

They believe that attitudes have three components namely: affective (feelings), cognitive (belief or knowledge) and behavioural (a predisposition to act in a particular way). Similarly, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) have defined attitudes as tendencies to evaluate an entity with some degree of favour or disfavour, ordinarily expressed in cognitive, affective and behavioural responses.

Like many other constructs, attitudes are not directly observable but can be inferred from observable responses. Similarly Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined attitude as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object. Attitudes of the non-disabled are proving to be a major barrier in the social

integration of persons with disabilities. "The more severe and visible the deformity is, the greater is the fear of contagion, hence the attitudes of aversion and segregation towards the crippled" (Desai, 1990, p.19).

In Bangladesh where life is difficult for many able bodied people, disabled people are more likely to face much greater problem in the absence of a disabled friendly environment. They are less likely to be educated, employed or rehabilitated. Social segregation of disabled person is extremely widespread. Moreover, social welfare services still do not provide special privileges for the disabled. As a result, most disabled people usually face insensitivity, cruelty, and often pity. The dominance of a medical model of disability has tended to 'blame the victim' which, as Imrie states, "shows people with disabilities as 'inferior, dependent and of little or no value'".

Approximately 14 million persons with disabilities live in Bangladesh. Disability had a devastating effect on the quality of life of disabled people with a particularly negative effect on their marriage, educational attainment, employment, and emotional state.

Disabilities also jeopardize their personal, family and social life. More than half of the disabled people were looked at negatively by society. Disabled women and girls suffered more from negative attitudes than their male counterparts, resulting in critical adverse effects on their psychological and social health.

Most of the persons with disabilities receive little or no development assistance. Therapeutic services and availability of assistive devices are also extremely limited. People with disabilities are left out of the development process mainly due to lack of awareness of the people who design and implement development programs, negative attitude among the general population prevalent towards persons with disabilities, scarcity of resources and the lack of knowledge and skills on how to address the needs of persons with disabilities inside development programs. (Noman & Nazmul, 2005).

The significance of attitudes towards inclusion from various persons such as educators, administrator, parents, children with disabilities and widely reflected the attitudes of the general community (Opdal et al, 2001; Smith, 1998; Wiji, 2001; Yoder, 2002). They all agree positive attitudes of persons who are concerned with the education of children with disabilities have been put forward as a decisive factor in making the learning environment

more inclusive and which can deal with segregation. The researcher states that peoples' attitudes towards education for children with disabilities are influenced strongly by cultures, norms, socio-economical conditions, the working environment, and their educational background.

In many developing countries, culture, socio-culture attitudes, values, expectations and beliefs are discriminatory against persons with disabilities. Surveys found that in Bangladesh, like many other cultures, negative thinking about disabilities is still a psychological barrier. People with disabilities are still considered shameful and are stigmatized and excluded from community life (Khan, 1999). These researchers state that the negative perceptions from community seriously affect the children's' academic achievements, especially among the children with special needs.

### 3 .Methodological Views

The researcher decided to do a case study with a qualitative open-ended interview. Qualitative research allows the researcher to “listen to the views of participants and obtain a detailed understanding of the phenomenon” (Creswell, 2008, p. 51). Cassell and Symon (1994) defined the characteristics for qualitative research: "a focus on interpretation rather than quantification; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting research; an orientation towards process rather than outcome; a concern with context—regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation" (p.7). This approach is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation, values, and opinions of stakeholders within a bounded timeframe (Stake, 1995).

Qualitative case studies can further be described as particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic: particularistic referring to a focus on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon; descriptive meaning that the end product of a case study is a rich, thick description of the phenomenon under study; and heuristic indicating that case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). Qualitative data collection is about “asking, watching, and reviewing” (Wolcott, 1992, p. 19); therefore, the data was collected through interviews with stakeholders and analysis of existing documents (public records, personal documents, physical materials within the study setting, and researcher-generated documents). Non-structured interviews rooted in the constructivist paradigm were used to obtain data from stakeholders (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p.23).

Case studies are widely used in organizational studies across the social sciences, and there is some indication that the case study method is increasingly being used due to growing confidence in the case study as a rigorous research strategy (cf. e.g. Hartley, 1994, p.208; Hartley, 2004, p.323), Stake (2000)... concurs, suggesting that case studies have become "one of the most common ways to do qualitative inquiry," but at the same time concedes that "they are neither new nor essentially qualitative" (p.435). In any case, quoting one of the most



prominent experts in case study research, Robert K. Yin, we can say that "[u]sing case studies for research purposes remains one of the most challenging of all social science endeavors" (Yin, 2003, p.1.). According to Yin (2003) there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (pp.83, 85-96). Indeed, the case study's unique strength is "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (Yin, 2003, p.8).

### **3.1 Research design and method**

The research methodology basically followed the case study design with the qualitative method used to collect information/data for the research: in-depth interviews, collection of documents from secondary sources (i.e., collecting and reviewing constitutional provisions on education and in particular special need education), education policy of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB), rules and guidelines of the GOB on special needs education, and a comparison of the Bangladesh position with other countries.

A total of 5 questionnaires were used which were open-ended questions. The researcher used a participatory approach in the whole process. The two main stakeholders were the disabled and those working with the children with special needs for a long time. Other main stakeholders/respondents were: government / policy department of the Officials of Disability, education ministries, and education departments in universities, high court judges, and etcetera.

The study used both primary and secondary sources to gather relevant information.

#### **Primary source: (Interview)**

The primary source for this research was interviews with open-ended questions. Interviews was conducted with those who directly work with the special children and policy makers who are involved directly or indirectly with the education of children with special needs. Interview questions were initially developed from the research questions and were refined throughout the interview process.

### **Secondary source: (Document study)**

- Constitution of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
- National Acts on Education
- Education policy of the government of Bangladesh
- National disability policies and legislation
- Rules and guidelines of the government on special needs education
- Government regulations of concerned ministries on education.
- Documents of international agencies (e.g. UNICEF, UNESCO)

## **3.2 Research instruments:**

### **3.2.1 Interviews**

The interview was constructed with the purpose of seeking the answers to the research questions based on the research objectives. Interviews allowed the researcher to “tap into local views, household and community knowledge” to “identify significant categories of human experience up close” (Genzuck, p. 2). As common with quantitative analyses, there are various forms of interview design that can be developed to obtain thick, rich data utilizing a qualitative investigational perspective (Creswell, 2007). For the purpose of examination, there are three formats for interview design that will be explored which are summarized by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003): (a) informal conversational interview, (b) general interview guide approach, and (c) standardized open-ended interview. The researcher selected the standardized open-ended interview process for this study. The standardized open-ended interview is extremely structured in terms of the wording of the questions. Participants are always asked identical questions, but the questions are worded so that responses are open-ended (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

This open-endedness allows the participants to contribute as much detailed information as they desire and it also allows the researcher to ask probing questions as a means of follow-up. Standardized open-ended interviews are the most popular form of interviewing utilized in

research studies because of the nature of the open-ended questions, allowing the participants to fully express their viewpoints and experiences. In comparison, open-ended interviews call for participants to fully express their responses in as much detail as desired. This can be quite difficult for researchers to extract similar themes or codes from the interview transcripts compared to less open-ended responses.

Although the data provided by participants are rich and thick with qualitative data, it can be a more cumbersome process for the researcher to sift through the narrative responses in order to fully and accurately reflect an overall perspective of all interview responses through the coding process. However, according to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), this reduces researcher biases within the study, particularly when the interviewing process involves many participants.

In practice the interview generally takes one of four directions:

1. An informal interview in which questions emerge from the immediate context.
2. An interview guide approach in which issues are specified in advance and the researcher decides the sequence in the course of the interview.
3. A standardized open-ended interview in which the exact sequence of questions is determined in advance and participants are asked the same questions in the same order.
4. A closed, fixed response interview in which questions and response categories are determined in advance

The researcher used the first three out of four strategies over the time given for interviews. The selection of which strategy to use was often determined on the spot in the context of factors such as the time available for the interview and the relevance of the information being offered by the interviewee. As a generalization, the framing of questions was carefully considered to suit the participants and the discussions were deliberately informal, with the participant sometimes directing the course of the interview.

### **3.3 Sample and sampling procedures**

Creswell (2007) discusses the importance of selecting the appropriate candidates for interviews. He asserts that the researcher should utilize one of the various types of sampling strategies such as criterion based sampling or critical case sampling (among many others) in order to obtain qualified candidates that will provide the most credible information to the study. Creswell also suggests the importance of acquiring participants who will be willing to openly and honestly share information or “their story” (p. 133). It might be easier to conduct the interviews with participants in a comfortable environment where the participants do not feel restricted or uncomfortable to share information.

#### **3.3.1 Purposeful sampling:**

In purposeful sampling, the goal is to select cases that are likely to be ‘information-rich’ with respect to the purpose of the study. Purposeful sampling is not designed to achieve population validity. The intent is to achieve an in-depth understanding of selected individuals, not to select a sampling that will represent accurately a defined population (Gall, Gall, & Borg (2007). Purposeful sampling was used in this study because it was more important to have a relevant range and salience of perceptions than to have quantifiable measures of the distribution of stakeholder input (Babiuch & Farhar, 1994; Greene, 1988).

Identification of stakeholders has been problematic in past participatory evaluation studies (Greene, 1988). Therefore, the first step in this study was to identify and select stakeholders based on theoretical definitions of stakeholders. Guba and Lincoln (1989) place stakeholders into the three categories of agent, beneficiary, and underrepresented. Agents are those persons involved in producing, using, and implementing the program; beneficiaries are those persons who profit in some way from the use of the program; and underrepresented are those persons who are negatively affected by the program. In addition, Greene (1988) defined appropriate stakeholders for participation in a priority setting as those who (a) have legitimate stake in the outcome, (b) have sufficient program knowledge to contribute to the process in meaningful ways, and (c) have a high self-defined stake in university research. Ideally, stakeholder representation in a participatory model should be based on the relative stake in the outcome and a commitment to the process, rather than on superficial diversity criteria, and embracing the core values of equity, parity, and justice (Greene, 1988).

The quality of learning is and must be at the heart of education for all in inclusive education. A successful education system requires the broad-based effort of the entire community and all stakeholders. The stakeholders in inclusive education are identified based on their functions in relation to learning, participation, and development of children with disabilities. They may consist of those of the highest levels of a nation like government ministries or of the most concrete members such as the child. In this study, stakeholders taken into consideration are all from different levels of the society.

UNESCO (1994) suggests that all stakeholders should work together to develop environments conducive to learning. Different children have different needs related to physical and physiological, security, social-emotional, cognitive, and aesthetic aspects (Maslow, 1943). The responsibility for meeting children's needs cannot be put upon one or two individuals. Providing children with education, which leads to an equal society, cannot be accomplished only by schools. It should be the concern of society as a whole.

The stakeholders were chosen to represent the major constituencies of the education world, particularly in relation to teaching and learning, policy-making, practice, and research. These included representatives from the following: national and local government, which were comprised of elected members, policy-makers, research funding agencies, the teaching profession, and stakeholders with an international perspective. It is worth noting that these stakeholders did not include representatives from the ultimate user community, parents, students and other learners. They would have offered a very different perspective based upon the immediate needs of the education system of Bangladesh.

Those who were selected were selected because in the Bangladeshi context, they are important in their respective fields. They are the people who directly or indirectly influence the government system. Bangladesh is a country of personified society, which means the person is more important than an institution or organization. That is why position is important--the person who is in position has the power to change or implement something new.

### **3.3.2 Stakeholders qualification:**

My main concern was to find out the awareness of the stakeholders about the education laws of special needs, so I decided to interview the stakeholders who are directly or indirectly

involved in the education system of Bangladesh. My sample is purposive. I interviewed eight stakeholders from different backgrounds and qualifications. My first job was to identify and select stakeholders who fall into my categories. Then I contacted them and collected their input. Following this, I continued ongoing communications with the stakeholders. Dialogue amongst stakeholders continued throughout the entire duration of data collection.

**Table 3: Stakeholders Qualification**

No	Stakeholders	Qualification and Relevant
1	Academician	University Professor, Department of Special Education, involved in curriculum development, inclusion and awareness programs. Working with the Government and non government organization as a consultant.
2	NGO( international)	A disabled, lifelong proponent of the rights of disabled people who is internationally acclaimed.
3	Member of a leading organization of disabled in Bangladesh	Specialist in “Education policy and analysis and Inclusion in Primary level”.
4	Civil servant (Education Ministry)	Presently one of the top civil servants in the Government of Bangladesh. 25 years of experience as a civil servant. These Senior civil servants are the key factors to formulate the laws in Bangladesh.
5	Specialist(Special education teacher)	Over 20 years of experience in teaching the visually impaired children. Experience includes both type of environment, special and inclusive.
6	NGO( local)	One of the most highly educated disabled people in the country obtained Master degree, working for more than 15 years for the education of the special children and adult.
7	Specialist(Psychologist)	More than 18 years of experience in special school as a professionally qualified psychologist.
8	Member of judiciary	One of the senior most judges of Bangladesh, presently one of the 95 judges of Supreme court, the highest court of the country.

### **3.3.3 Pilot Study:**

It is important to conduct a pilot study before starting an interview, because they are quite susceptible to bias. Therefore the interview guide and procedure should be pilot tested to ensure that they will yield reasonably unbiased data. During the pilot interviews the researchers should be alert to communication problems. The pilot tests also can be used to identify threatening questions. Several methods of opening the interview should be tried to determine the one that establishes the best rapport and cooperation. (Gal, Gal & Borg, 2007)

The pilot study was done as the last step of preparing the research instrument. The intention was to try the interview questionnaires, test its adequateness and the possible strength of the information collected from it before carrying out the main study. One of the stakeholders participated in the pilot study.

The pilot study revealed some unanticipated problems with interview question wording, concepts, and the content of some questions. One of the main problems that were faced by the researcher was that she tended to lead the subject in his or her answer to the questions and sometimes filled in the gaps. Taking this useful information into consideration, necessary changes were made before conducting the main study.

### **3.3.4 Data collection**

An open-ended interview process was designed to collect qualitative data. This process was used to identify the awareness level of the stakeholders about the laws of special needs children and to suggest some strategies to address the identified challenges. The interview was considered an appropriate method because it allowed the researcher to “engage, understand and interpret the key feature of the life-worlds of the participants” and to uncover the “descriptions of specific situations and actions, rather than generalities. (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p.355).

The researcher contacted 25 potential stakeholders via e-mail, of which five replied. As a result, the researcher contacted other stakeholders by visiting them more than once and made appointments. All interviews were conducted in the Bangla language and were conducted by the researcher in person. The interview was taken in the office premises of each participant for their convenience. Participants were assured of their anonymity.

The interview process was flexible and the participant could review or change any part of their interview at any given time. Not all of the interviews were audio taped because some of the participants did not want their interviews recorded, so the researcher had to write down the answers and verify them. Each interview session was between 50 to 90 minutes in length.

The interview findings obtained from the respondents were transcribed and validated with the respondents to ensure the validity of the feedback obtained. The data were then isolated, reviewed, and interpreted by the researcher, who met regularly to discuss and negotiate findings and conclusions.

### **3.3.5 Validity and reliability**

The study's strategy for enhancing validity included four methods endorsed by Merriam (1998). Triangulation strengthened the overall validity by obtaining data from multiple sources. In this case, eight interviews were collected from stakeholders along with document analysis. Member checks added rigor to the study by asking participants to examine the findings for accuracy. Review also added to validity by submitting early drafts of the research findings to participants for review and feedback. Lincoln (1999 , Lincoln, Y. (1999).

Making judgments regarding the quality of qualitative research. Keynote address to the American Association of Agricultural Educators. Orlando, FL.) recommended the terms rigor and adequacy to address reliability in qualitative research designs. Four criteria for judging rigor and adequacy include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 236-243,.).

Credibility refers to the accuracy with which the researcher has represented the views of the subjects in her conclusions. Credibility was enhanced in this study with prolonged engagement, progressive subjectivity, and frequent checking. Transferability is only possible when the results of this study can be applied to similar settings. Descriptive details of the case will allow others to decide if the findings are applicable to their situation.

This study was not intended to be generalized to other populations, but some analytical generalizations may be drawn to the extent that this case resembles the reader's situation (Yin, 1994).



Dependability refers to the extent to which people not involved in the study can track the research process and determine which raw data were used to reach corresponding conclusions. Detailed records of the data collection process and analyses procedures were kept by the researcher, allowing interested people to reference exact quotes and corresponding interpretations. The archived documents and notes all served to strengthen the study's dependability.

Confirmability refers to the process of checking interpretations and conclusions for researcher bias. Bias can never be completely removed from an individual, but such biases were duly acknowledged during the course of the study and analysis of the findings. The researcher's main concern was to ask the right questions and wrote down the exact words said by the informants.

### **3.4 Results (analyze and discussion)**

The final constituent in the interview design process is that of interpreting the data that was gathered during the interview process. During this phase, the researcher must make "sense" out of what was just uncovered and compile the data into sections or groups of information, also known as themes or codes (Creswell, 2003, 2007).

The researcher needs to develop a category label and definition of each type of phenomenon in the database that is to be analyzed. Also, he or she needs to consider whether a particular category can be classified into subtypes. There are two types of categories for coding. One approach is to use a list of categories developed by other researchers. The other approach is to develop the researcher's own categories. The researcher needs to study his or her data carefully in order to identify significant phenomena and then determine which phenomena share sufficient similarities that can be considered instances of construct. This construct becomes a category of the researcher's own category system. (Gal, Gal & Borg, 2007, p.467).

According to Hartley (1994, 2004), data collection and analysis are "developed together in an iterative process," which can be a strength, as it allows for theory development which is grounded in empirical evidence (p.220; p.329). In addition, a careful description of the data and the development of categories in which to place behaviors or processes have proven to be important steps in the process of analyzing the data. The data may then be organized around

certain topics, key themes, or central questions. Finally, the data needs to be examined to see how far it fits or fails to fit the expected categories.

Yin (2003) maintains that data analysis consists of "examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study" (p.109). In general, "data analysis means a search for patterns in data" (Neuman, 1997, p.426).

Neuman also states that once a pattern is identified, it is interpreted in terms of a social theory or the setting in which it occurred and that the qualitative researcher moves from the description of a historical event or social setting to more general interpretations of its meaning. In fact, "the ultimate goal of the case study is to uncover patterns, determine meanings, construct conclusions and build theory" (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003, p.67).

Primary data is analyzed by interpretational analysis, category/coding and constant comparison. Qualitative interpretation refers to "the data collection of respondents' experiences, attitudes, and knowledge of a certain phenomena via researcher enquiry through interviews, observations, diaries, journals and other forms of non-numeric data analysis" (Creswell, 2003, p. 17). Qualitative data provides interpretations of "lived experiences of the participants" involved in the study (Creswell, 2008, p. 567). Interpretations provided by the participants provide the researchers with various themes that emerge from the qualitative data (Creswell, 2008, p. 269).

The audio recorded interviews and the written interviews were transcribed to analyze the responses of the participants. To enhance internal validity (Creswell, 2008), the transcribed data was shared with the participants and necessary changes were made according to their suggestions.

The final transcript was translated by the author into English. "General inductive analysis approach" (Thomas, 2006, p. 238) was followed to analyze the interviewed data. This analysis approach has five steps including:

- 1) preparation of raw data files (data cleaning),
- 2) close reading of text,
- 3) creation of categories,

4) overlapping coding and un-coded text, and

5) continuing revision and refinement of category system (Thomas, 2006).

Initially, the author developed the themes based on the sample of transcripts. The coding process described by Creswell (2002) was followed to develop the themes. There are five steps in coding process for inductive analysis which included:

a) initial reading of text data,

b) identifying specific text segments related to objectives,

c) labeling the segments of text to create categories,

d) reducing overlap and redundancy among the categories, and

e) creating a model incorporating most important categories (Creswell, 2002, p. 266).

Secondary data was evaluated and comparisons were completed with countries of similar economic and social conditions.

### **3.5 Ethics and confidentiality**

Ethics in research refers to considerations taken to protect and respect the rights and well fare of participants and other parties associated with the activity (Reynolds, 1982). Kvale (1996) emphasized the importance of taking into consideration ethical questions from the very start of an investigation and through to the final report.

To ensure confidentiality and to avoid bias in the study, all steps and procedures were done carefully and legally. The aspects related to the culture, custom, rules and national laws for the research process were respected. The stakeholders were informed of the nature and the purpose of the research before they were asked to participate. All stakeholders were given the right to withdraw from the study.

The protection of stakeholders' privacy was an important issue that was taken into consideration. Protection of the privacy of the stakeholders was arranged through making the interview anonymous.

## 4 .Data Presentation and Results Discussion

### Introduction

The first section outlines the stakeholders' views on the current laws of special education and reflects upon their perception of its quality and relevance – two of the major areas of criticism from the recent past. The second section examines the many factors that were raised during the stakeholder interviews that they believe underlie the current state of education system in Bangladesh. These issues range from structural factors to curriculum development and discrimination in education system which has been practiced over the last three decades. Irrespective of the stakeholders' concerns regarding the current state of disability law, there was consensus in the belief that progress in laws is necessary. The final section draws together their views on the kind of issues that they believe need to be addressed and begins to outline the kind of activities that would lead to building the proper disable friendly society in Bangladesh.

This study focused on exploring the awareness of eight stakeholders. Although the results from this study reveal many debatable factors, only the emerging ones are highlighted.

### 4.1 Need new laws

**Table 4: First Conclusion**

Stakeholders	Need new laws
1	Our education law (Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990) seems all right to incorporate children with special needs into education. However, there are some clauses of the law that gave “legal authority” to the education officers and head teachers to keep some children out of education on grounds of their so called inability. This is very contradictory to the EFA goals and also discriminatory, which violates our Constitutional obligations.

2	There is no education law in existence in Bangladesh which includes or covers children with special needs. However, National Education Policy approved by the Cabinet of the Government of Bangladesh and approved by the National Parliament on 7th December 2010 and it has included scope and opportunity to pursue education by children with special needs. Furthermore, the Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990 does not cover the interests of the children with special needs; rather, it has had a negative effect.
3	There is no special law that is necessary for the children with special needs because if the existing law can be implemented properly we don't need any extra law. We have the woman and child law; if this law can be implemented properly, then we do not need extra law.
4	The people of Bangladesh are not aware of their rights. That's why we need these laws in our country. Laws can pressurize people to do the right thing. People are bound to follow the laws.
5	We need these laws to serve the children with special children.
6	We do not need extra educational law for the children with special needs; we just need to facilitate other acts properly.
7	We couldn't fulfill the goal of EFA (Education For All) that's why we need the special educational law for the children with special needs
8	We need special laws for the children with special needs.

Out of eight stakeholders, six of them mentioned the need for educational laws for children with special needs. When asked for their views on the current state of the laws of special needs children, the majority of stakeholders, from all perspectives, expressed concern regarding its proper implementation. The reflection from the interview shows that two of the main stakeholders are not aware about the existence of the laws and regulation about special education. One of the stakeholders has worked with special children more than 20 years and this person is not aware about the laws related to special children. After interviewing this person, the researcher also found out that 20 teachers, including the head teacher who has worked in that school for about 30 years, were not aware about the laws of special needs

children either. The person who works in the judicial system was also not aware about the special laws.

## 4.2 Policy is not sufficient/Discriminated education policy

**Table 5: Second Conclusion**

Stakeholders	Policy is not sufficient/Discriminated education policy
1	Most laws are promoting the medical model of disability. Those have to be revised based on social models.
2	The primary reason that legal provisions are in practice in Bangladesh is because they were promulgated much earlier, but in many areas are still in conflict with different articles of UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities.
3	Our law is not practical enough to implement so we are not getting any benefit from this law
4	Our education is not need based its ego based.
5	The policy is not sufficient because there are so many loop holes in this law and nothing is described clearly in here.
6	Discriminated education policy (Bengali medium, English, Arabic)
7	
8	

Six of the stakeholders said that our disability policy is not sufficient for the fulfillment of the educational rights of the children with special needs; however, one of the stakeholders mentions that in Bangladesh there are three types of education policy that exist. They are Bangla Medium, English, and Madrasa Medium (religious education, Arabic). All of these mediums have their own curricula, exam system, and education board that is run differently, so there is discrimination in regular education system as a whole. One of the stakeholders

mentions that the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990 does not cover the interest of the children with special needs; rather, it has negative effects.

Another stakeholder said that there are so many loop holes in the law and that nothing is described clearly in these laws. One of the loop holes is the “Lunacy Act 1912”. At the time when the Indian Lunacy Act came into force on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1912, the following mental hospitals were in existence: (Overbeck, Wright 1921). Assam: 1. Tezpur (Indians). Bihar and Orissa: 1. Ranchi (Europeans), Patna: 2. Bengal: Berhampur (Indians), Central. Dacca (Indians). (Capital of Bangladesh since 1971).

India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have come a long way from that time politically, socially and economically. However, none of these countries has been able to change the actual act of 1912. A recent survey (1975-77) of major enactments of mental health legislation of 43 countries carried out by Curran and Harding (1978) showed that India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nigeria were following the laws of 1912, 1912, 1912 and 1916, respectively, while most other countries revised their mental health legislation more than once in recent years in accordance with the modern public health legislation and psychiatric service objectives. The 1912 Act guided the destiny of psychiatry in India and its neighboring countries, and its abuses are ably pointed out by Dutt (1985) (O. Somasundaram, 1987).

## 4.3 Charity not rights- based

**Table 6: Third Conclusion**

Stakeholders	Charity based not rights- based
1	The Social Welfare Department has the responsibility to implement the special educational law instead of Ministry of Education.
2	The whole philosophy and the concept of the Act is welfare and charity based instead of rights- based.
3	Bangladesh is an agro-based country, so the agricultural work should come first, then education; it is still not the first priority area for our children.
4	Education in Bangladesh is a basic need but not a basic right.

5	
6	
7	
8	

Half of the stakeholders mentioned that the responsibility of special education is based on incorrect values. It is still charity, not a right, though there are constitutional, legislative, and policy bindings, and Bangladesh ratified the CRC and signed the entire International and Regional Declaration on Education. The Government of Bangladesh has not yet undertaken significant steps to ensure educational rights for children with disabilities.

The educational program of disabled children remains under the Ministry of Social Welfare, which indicates that the disabled children's education issue is being considered as a welfare issue, not as a development issue. Thus, there is a big gap in incorporating disabled children into mainstream education. In Bangladesh, the Education Policy provides a provision for “Education For All” and primary education is compulsory and free. Disabled children are left out of this program, as their programme of education is seen as a welfare and charity issue. Under PEDP-II (Primary Education Development Project- II), it has been specified that in primary schools mildly disabled children should be enrolled, but unfortunately this does not happen in practice (Zaman, Nazma, 2009, p-118).

The Department of Primary Education does not have any program for screening the children in their settings. As a result, even if someone wanted to do something, there is no information in the Department either. This is one of the reasons special children do not get the resources they need for their studies. There are some visually-impaired children in the regular school but the Primary Education Department does not admit that.

We have the PEDP-II, but this program cannot work because we do not know or cannot identify the needs of the child. The government conducted a children census, but in this census, the children with visual impairment and Speech-hearing impaired are not included.



On the other hand, there are no tools or information for the teachers on how to do the screening for the children with mild mental challenges. The government is yet to recognize sign language for hearing-impaired children. There was a base line survey conducted for low-vision children in 2005, but until now, there are no books for the children with low vision. (Zaman, Nazma, 2009).

## 4.4 Not in favour of inclusion

**Table 7: Forth Conclusion**

Stakeholders	Not in favor of inclusion
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	We need more special schools. The special schools we have now are the way of earning money from the donor's and spending it for personal use for the people of the NGO's.
8	There should be separate schools for the regular children and the children with special needs because it is chaotic to teach the children with special needs in a regular setting.

Two of the stakeholders amongst the eight are not enthusiastic about educating children with disabilities in regular schools. However, both of them argued for the need of special schools. In spite of the odds, there are some opportunities for the education of special children in the mainstream schools, but most of the parents and the stakeholders' first choice of education for special children are special schools. Their logic is that if special children are included in the

regular system, the regular classes will be hampered. They point to the resources and facilities of special schools for their reasoning, which most of the regular schools do not have. One of the stakeholders also mentions that as a parent of regular children, he would not send his children in an inclusive school with the special children.

## 4.5 Social system is not disabled friendly

**Table 8: Fifth Conclusion**

Stakeholders	Social system is not disabled friendly
1	In our law, the disability issue is not specifically addressed or described clearly so the school and teacher can easily ignore the child to take them into their school.
2	Merely changing laws would not help to change the current situation of education opportunities of children with disabilities in Bangladesh unless we change our mindset accordingly to reform/transform every part of our education system in a coherent manner.
3	Disability law has some hidden elements that would facilitate discrimination against different aspects the life of a person with disabilities.
4	Lack of ethics-we don't have any principles.
5	Our mind set barriers -the stakeholders especially the teachers –don't welcome the decision to take the disabled child in their school.
6	Regular parents as a whole receive no positive response from the community.
7	Beliefs and norms of the society (social infrastructure)
8	

Seven out of eight stakeholders agree that the social system is not disabled friendly. Though many persons with disabilities are able to live and lead productive lives, they are neglected by society as a whole. Many people in Bangladesh view persons with disabilities as a curse and a cause of embarrassment to the family. Most of the time parents refuse to accept the fact that their child has disabilities. They are unsympathetic to the situation of persons with

disabilities. Women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to social discrimination and neglect. Political, social, cultural and economic factors can create barriers to learning and participation of children with disabilities.

# 5 .Conclusions and Implications

## Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary of the main findings from the research that identifies key factors about the awareness of the educational laws of the stakeholders in Bangladesh. Each of the factors is considered as a challenge that must be addressed over the coming years. Specific strategies and recommendations will be offered in relation to each of the major findings.

## 5.1 Conclusions

Given that many of the stakeholders tended to agree, at least in principle, that laws and policies will be effective only if they are implemented correctly. The reflections from the stakeholders show that some of them are not aware about the laws or regulations mentioning inclusive education. From discussions with them, it appears the problem may be in the process of transforming the knowledge about the laws into useful tools for establishing the rights of the special children.

The existence of legislation and policies on inclusive education at the national level is one of the guarantees for exercising equal educational rights for citizens with disabilities. All of the documents have something to do with some part of the UNO resolutions. The explanation for this lack of knowledge is packed within three reasons: i) the documents have not been widely circulated and are not easily accessible, ii) no one has interest in studying laws and policies, and iii) they are too busy to be interested about these laws.

Some of the stakeholders also mention that it is not necessary to know about these laws if someone wants to work with the children with special children. The laws will not bring any change if the public at large is not aware and do not understand them. It is worse for those who are responsible for implementing the laws. According to the some of the findings, the researcher came up with some conclusions. They are: First, the national policies have not adopted inclusive education and second, the recent policy does not include any guidelines to either address or facilitate inclusive education.

The social stigma causes almost total exclusion of the children from the mainstream schools. As a result, education needs to be complemented for some groups by supportive interventions such as shelter, protection and health. All the stakeholders were unanimous in their view that education and rehabilitation need to be planned on an urgent basis. Attitudinal barriers were seen at all levels- policy makers, implementers, and users.

Planners and policy makers agreed that the situation at the ground level was far from supporting inclusive practices because of barriers related to practicalities of practice. There seems to be lack of coordination and linkage among the relevant ministries on issues related to the education of special groups.

As mentioned earlier, the Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh (Article 28. 3 of part III) is against any kind of discrimination in providing human rights on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or disability. Again, Article 28.4 supported the need to provide specialized facilities to meet children's special needs. Bangladesh has developed a National Disability Welfare Policy and enacted a law known as the Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001.

Bangladesh is a signatory to the international declarations made by the United Nations to ensure basic human rights for all people like most other countries in the world. Despite being a developing country, Bangladesh is not behind UK, the USA or Australia in enacting laws and policies to protect the rights of people with disabilities. However, it is important to consider the level of implementation of these laws and policies in improving the educational situation for people with disabilities.

A thorough review and comparison of the status, provision, and practices of inclusive education indicate that some confusion, absence of commitment among stakeholders, and lack of resources are the main causes for the lack of implementation of inclusive education in Bangladesh. (Tariq, 2011).

The National Education Policy (2000) discusses Special Education along with Health and Physical Education, Scout and Girl Guide. The policy has twenty-eight chapters, each dealing with different aspects of education. Special Education is the only area, which does not find an exclusive discussion. The policy discusses the need to set up special schools and also the provision of coordinated education programmes.

The government National Education Policy (NEP, 2000) indicates the following: The existing disparity will be removed to create the opportunity for all of receiving education of the same standard and characteristics through the mother tongue. The National Education Policy does not include any specific guideline to either address or facilitate planning for inclusive education. Children with disabilities are all considered to be one group with no differences among them.

Negative use of terminology such as, "handicapped", "deaf and dumb", "children with physical and mental problems," and statements such as "they also deserve some special consideration" do little to change existing perceptions and attitudes. There is a focus on "degrees of disability", alternative curriculum, and categories and groups of children rather than on the common needs of the children including those with disabilities. The assumption along the lines of "the disabled children develop fast if they are allowed to receive education with normal children" is against the very basis of inclusive practice. Research indicates that all children gain in inclusive learning settings and not just those with disabilities.

The current environment and condition related to inclusive education in Bangladesh as discussed above are uncomfortable for everyone who is involved in education for children with special needs. They appear to the external to the teachers and dependent upon the whole educational, cultural, and socio-economic situations of the country.

When considering the appropriate education environment for children with disabilities, most of the stakeholders are still stuck in the traditional view. They believe that special schools are better for children with disabilities than inclusive settings. Some of them fear that including children with disabilities in regular classes affects the learning of non-disable children in terms of care and instruction. This thinking goes against the conclusion of Sonpal-Valias (1997), which says that including children with disabilities in regular classroom does not slow down the process of non-disabled students.

The constitutional guarantee of free education is gradually translated into governmental promises that education will be made free and thereby universal. In its reports under international human rights treaties, the government of Bangladesh summarized in 1995 the constitutional guarantees of the right to education and training to include "every citizen's right to free primary education". It took five more years for the changing governments to

announce that eight years of education would be made free for boys and ten years for girls. This is yet to be translated into practice. (Copenhagen, 2006)

Present law concerning those with disabilities is absolutely against the interest of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psycho-social disabilities. The Lunacy Act of 1912 is still enforced in Bangladesh. In many instances, intellectually disabled persons and persons with psycho-social disabilities become victim by this Act when there is co-sharer or in absence of their legal guardians, the court declares them mentally unsound to manage their property interest. As a result, in many Muslim families, persons with intellectual disabilities fail to claim their genuine share since there is no special legislative measure to protect their interests.

Bangladesh has no anti-discrimination act to protect any form of discrimination against the marginalized and minority groups like persons with disabilities. In practice, the judicial system is reluctant to take statements from persons with hearing disabilities, persons with psycho-social disabilities, and persons with intellectual disabilities.

The Bangla Sign language is not yet accepted in the courts of Bangladesh for persons with hearing disabilities and the deaf, though they communicate with other people through Bangla sign language. The existing legal framework does not protect the educational rights and needs of the special children.

In Bangladesh there are more than 80,000 primary schools for elementary education. Thousands of secondary, higher secondary, and many institutions at the tertiary level are run by the government. There are many other types of educational institutions that exist and are run by the government. This year the government has allocated 5500 crore Taka in the national budget for education. In addition, there are many non-government organizations that run formal and non-formal education programs, the number of which is not less than 60,000. However, it is a matter of shame that no arrangement has been made in both the government and non-governmental levels for providing the education of PWD.

There is lack of consistent and reliable data on the magnitude and education status of children with disabilities and the disparities between regions and types of disabilities. This makes it difficult to understand the nature of the problem and to make realistic interventions. Thus,

Bangladesh follows the World Health Organization's (WHO) estimation that 10% of any given population has disabilities (DPE & CSID, 2002).

Though Bangladesh ratified the CRC and signed the entire international and regional declarations on education, as well as signed constitutional, legislative, and policy bindings, and, the government of Bangladesh has not yet undertaken significant steps to ensure education for children with disabilities. The educational program of disabled children remains under the Ministry of Social Welfare, which indicates that the disabled children's education issue is being considered as a welfare issue, not as a development issue. Therefore, there is a big gap in incorporating disabled children into mainstream education.

Moreover, the Ministry of Social Welfare is running 64 integrated schools for the blind, in which approximately 1000 visually-impaired are receiving education. In addition, in five government schools, more 200 blind children are receiving primary education. Furthermore, nine schools for the speech and hearing impaired are run by Ministry of Social Welfare, in which 100 children are currently attending classes. Two segregated schools are run by Ministry of Social Welfare for Intellectually Disabled in which 100 children are learning there. Only the non-government voluntary organizations are running the education program for disabled children by creating a conducive environment for learning for them.

The law as it stands today does not make a differentiation in the education of slightly, moderately, or severely handicapped children and therefore, disabled children who could have been integrated in the mainstream schools are denied the opportunity because the legislature has failed to distinguish between the needs and requirements of the children suffering from slight, moderate and severe disabilities. The integrated and inclusive model of education needs to be applied, keeping in mind what is more suitable given the infrastructure and economic conditions prevailing in the area. There is lack of adequate coordination for the development of disability-related activities and the organizations working with them, particularly between the government and NGOs (JICA, 2002).



## 5.2 Implications

This research will provide some insight about gaps in research relating to special needs education.

It will help in identifying areas of campaign - for example, campaign for awareness, campaign for infrastructures, etc.

This research will encourage parents of disabled children to be aware of their rights as parents to seek help and support from the community and government.

### 5.2.1 Implications for future study

A Expanded research is needed that would not only include the stakeholders chosen by the researcher but also parents, regular school teachers, leaders of the communities, and beneficiaries of special laws as a whole.

This study looks at the matter of challenges via the views of the stakeholders. Although it just touches the surface, it reveals the real challenges Bangladesh is facing in including special children in our society. Though the researcher did not find ample time and opportunity to investigate further, the findings still gave some hints for the concern of further research, which include:

- Implementation: clarify and change some of the current laws and policies on disability and inclusive education at different administrative levels
- Base and potentials for more concrete laws and policies
- Awareness building amongst parents/siblings/teachers/stakeholders

Other possibilities can be used depending upon the interests and experiences of individual researchers and situations.

## 5.3 Recommendations:

Inclusion is one of the practical ways of guaranteeing the fundamental right to education for children with disabilities and special needs as stated in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). It should be looked at as a viable tool of policy and changes in society. Besides the changes in materials and innovation and reform of the laws, personnel are essential for the effectiveness of inclusion. Moreover, a new thinking and right attitude of the whole society towards the nature and goal of inclusion is a requirement for practical implementation.

Political, social, cultural, and economic factors can create barriers to learning and participation of CwD's. Efforts of one person alone, whoever he or she is, cannot always prevent or reduce the barriers. UNESCO (1994) points out that apart from teachers and parents, other stakeholders and their involvement are of great importance in creating a real inclusive educational environment. (Nguyen, Bergsma, 2004)

A strong law and regulation framework as well as government commitment are critical to the achievement of inclusive education. Inclusion should be seen as a reform of the whole education system, tied closely together with the goal of Education for All and adopted as a philosophy to guide the Education for All national action plans. To do so, there is a need to have a powerful law on inclusive education with a set of principles at the national level and a concrete guide to transfer the principles to the grassroots level. The law should embrace the issue of human and financial resources towards a grand objective of successful inclusive education.

Making inclusion meaningful in the whole education system requires a new approach in attitudes. In order to change the education system, there first must be change in the attitudes of the stakeholders. One way of improving stakeholders' attitudes towards inclusive education is to raise awareness of the potential benefits of inclusive education for all students not only for the student with disabilities.

The following sets of recommendations are suggested by the researcher:

- Disabled people should be made aware of their rights, privileges, and existing laws. People with disabilities, as well as their organizations and groups must be involved in formulating policy and planning processes and designing programmes.

- Parents should be encouraged to share information based on their experience of raising their children. Opportunities need to be provided for exchanging these experiences with other parents and other concerned people.
- The involvement and participation of people at all levels is essential for understanding and promoting inclusive practice.
- Involvement of mass media is very important for a general disability awareness programme for the entire nation.
- A small amount of disability benefit allowance in the form of a financial incentive could be offered by the state.
- In general, most services, including health, education, social welfare, and institutions within the country, have to be adapted to the needs of people with disabilities.
- Laws should accordingly, be framed.
- A special behavioral counseling programme could be offered to parents through community-based rehabilitation programmes.
- Providing additional funding could be offered to ensure school infrastructure is appropriate for children with disabilities For instance, the classroom should be accessible, the books appropriate, the sanitation facilities accessible, etc.
- Developing inclusive education policies and practices at the national, local and school levels – to ensure proper investment in inclusive education, as well as good interaction at the school level, challenging any potential bullying or inappropriate behavior.
- A concerted and planned campaign on all fronts should be taken up to internalize the CRC and the need for encouraging inclusive practice.
- A country wide baseline situational analysis on disability issues is needed.
- The Government's Rules of Business should be changed so that the educational issue of disabled children becomes the responsibility of the mainstream Education Ministry.

- Develop model schools: Bangladesh could introduce regular model schools, at least in six divisional headquarters initially, where students with disabilities would receive inclusive education with adequate support.(Tariq, 2011)
- Curriculum should be made flexible and responsive to the diverse learning needs of all children.
- Government-NGO collaboration: About 200 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are working on disability issues in Bangladesh (DPE & CSID, 2002). However, most of them are working separately; hence, there is no coordination amongst them. Cooperation between the Government and NGOs is very important for advancing the cause of disabled children.
- The integrated and inclusive model of education needs to be applied, keeping in mind what is more suitable given the infrastructure and economic conditions prevailing in the area.
- A comprehensive policy and action plan comprising relevant support systems and funding mechanisms needs to be developed for promoting and strengthening the education system of disabled children aiming at maximum inclusion/coverage. The mainstream teachers' training curriculum should be revised to incorporate disability issues and the provision of special education. The number of training institutions should also increase.
- Teachers' status and salary/benefits should be upgraded to increase their interests/motivation in the teaching profession.
- Assessments of existing school and higher education curricula are needed, and/or should be revised, to make them universal so that the different types of disabled learners can cope with the curriculum.
- A support system relevant to issues such as accessibility (in transport, roads and school buildings) and therapeutical services (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychotherapy etc.) should be developed.

- Assistive technologies and reliable supplies of necessary aids/appliances, teaching/learning materials/equipment such as Braille books and equipment, sign language in the mother tongue, digital technology, etc need to be developed.
- Disability sensitization programmes to raise awareness should have the active participation of people with disabilities as role models. These people can propagate direct and positive messages to the general public. The issues related to disability should be included in the school curriculum to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities from the early years of childhood.
- Regional and international coordination and cooperation should be increased in order to share experiences and develop skills and capacity in strengthening the education system for disabled children.
- Support to children with disabilities could be built through creating a support network of nondisabled peers. This would help not only in sharing the responsibility but also promoting a non-discriminative social relationship.
- It is also crucially important to engage with disabled children directly: to build their confidence, awareness of their rights, and capacity to communicate. In Bangladesh, participatory processes such as Reflect are being adapted for use with groups of disabled children. This is working particularly well with groups of children with the same disability (for example, groups in which all the children are deaf, or partially sighted) as the children are able to develop their own systems of communication, which play to their strengths. Such group work has enabled participants to discuss issues among themselves, as well as communicate their understanding and perspectives to the wider community. (RIGHT TO EDUCATION Project © 2008).

Stakeholders' views about the laws of special education help us understand the ongoing process of education plans and actions of the government; this also gives us an idea about the stakeholders' positions on the issues.

## **Self Reflection**

When I started my study, I wondered what would happen in the end because some of the results I gathered during the data collection were things I had never considered before. For instance, I received negative responses from some of the stakeholders because I am a female. It now gives me a new perspective as a researcher. It also made it more challenging for me, which I enjoyed. Now I feel that I have the ability to go one more step into the area of disability and education of the children with disabilities, especially planning different programs for the children and their families in national level as well as doing something out of the box.

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# Appendix

## **Appendix 1: International commitments signed by the government of Bangladesh**

UNCRC (Ratified by GOB)

Art. 2: All children have the right to be protected from discrimination

Art. 12: All children have the right to be involved in and influence matters that affect them and adults need to listen to and respect children's views.

Art. 28: All children have equal rights and equal opportunities to education: Primary education must be compulsory and free of charges.

Art. 42/29: children, their parents and other adults have the right to learn about the UNCRC.

Art. 29: Education must be of good quality for all children: Meaningful, participatory, child-friendly and responsive to diversity.

E F A Conference Jomtien (1990) - Signed by GOB

There is a need for a broader, more inclusive understanding of special educational needs:

- Children who are currently enrolled in primary school, but for various reasons do not achieve adequately.
- Children w h o currently not enrolled in primary school, but w h o could be enrolled if schools were more welcoming and responsive.
- The relatively smaller group of children with more severe impairments who have special educational needs that are not being met.

N O T E: 80% of children with disabilities have mild/moderate impairments. These children can, with minor adjustments, be included in mainstream education if stereotyping and negative attitudes towards these children would change.

Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action - 1994

"Regular schools that are inclusive are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, such schools provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system. ""(Art. 2) " . . . Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions." (Art. 3)

Dakar E F A Declaration (signed by GOB) - 2000

Six Goals:

- 1) Expand early childhood care and education
- 2) Ensure free, compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015
- 3) Promote learning and life skills programs for young people and adults.
- 4) Expand adult literacy by 50% by 2015.
- 5) Eliminate gender disparities in access to education in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality by 2015
- 6) Enhance educational quality

All Governments (including G o B ) pledged themselves to : "Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments " (Article 8).

It also states: "...in order to attract and retain children from marginalized and excluded groups, education systems should respond flexibly.... Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners." (Expanded commentary, Para 33). "The key challenge is to ensure that the broad vision of Education for All as an inclusive concept is reflected in national government and agency funding policies " (Dakar Framework for Action, Para 19)

E-9 Declaration - Recife (signed by GOB) - 2000



One of the main goals: " . . . . Include all children with special needs in mainstream education."

South Asian Islamabad Declaration on E F A (2003)

Responding to critical questions of:

- 1) The provision of free, inclusive, gender responsive quality basic education.
- 2) Special focus on Goal 5 (Dakar Declaration): Gender equality

## **Appendix 2: National commitments signed by the government of Bangladesh**

### **1. Compulsory Primary Education Act (Bangladesh 1990)**

Primary education is compulsory and free of charge for all children.

### **2. National Education Policy - 2000**

In the process of REVISION

### **3. NPAII for EFA (2002-2015)**

- Is based on the Bangladesh Constitution - its overall goal being that of nondiscrimination.
- Being finalized.

### **4. Reference Reading: Concept-paper/Feasibility Study: Community-based Education Management Information System (EMIS) - 2003**

"It is the right of every child to have access to quality education, which is provided in an environment that is safe and child-friendly, while respecting and responding to differences in learning needs. This right can best be promoted and protected through the participation and empowerment of all stakeholders in educational planning and management, contributing to good governance in education at the local level. "

### **5. NPA for Children II**


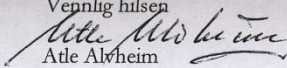
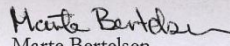
Children highlight the importance of QUALITY education for all children. They complain about unmotivated and unfriendly teachers, and the frequent use of physical and mental punishment/abuse in schools.

## 6. PEDP II

Focus on:

- 1) Organizational development and capacity building
- 2) Quality improvement I schools and classrooms
- 3) Quality improvement through infrastructure development

## Appendix 3: Permission letter from Norwegian Data Services

<b>Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS</b> NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES		
 Harald Martinsen Institutt for spesialpedagogikk Universitetet i Oslo Postboks 1140 Blindern 0318 OSLO		<small>Harald Hårfagre gate 29 N-5007 Bergen Norway Tel: +47-55 58 21 17 Fax: +47-55 58 96 50 nsd@nsd.uib.no www.nsd.uib.no Org.nr. 985 321 884</small>
Vår dato: 13.10.2011	Vår ref: 28107 / 3 / MAB	Deres dato:                      Deres ref:
<b>KVITTERING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER</b>		
Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 21.09.2011. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:		
28107	<i>Law and Inclusion: Stakeholders` View of Special Needs in Bangladesh</i>	
Behandlingsansvarlig Daglig ansvarlig Student	<i>Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øverste leder Harald Martinsen Shahnaz Parveen</i>	
<p>Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.</p> <p>Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.</p> <p>Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <a href="http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html">http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html</a>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.</p> <p>Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <a href="http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp">http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp</a>.</p> <p>Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 27.04.2012, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.</p>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div style="width: 45%;"><p>Vennlig hilsen</p><p>Atle Alkheim</p></div><div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;"><p>Marte Bertelsen</p></div></div>		
<p>Kontaktperson: Marte Bertelsen tlf: 55 58 33 48 Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering Kopi: Shahnaz Parveen, Olav M Troviks Vei 10, H-0506, 0864 OSLO</p>		
<small>Avdelingskontorer / District Offices: OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no TROMSØ: NSD, HSL, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. martin-arne.andersen@uit.no</small>		

## Personvernombudet for forskning



### Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 28107

Formålet med prosjektet er å undersøke utforming og gjennomføring av utdanningsprogrammer for barn med nedsatt funksjonsevne i Bangladesh.

Utvalget består av lærere, byråkrater og politikere, tilsammen ca. 50 personer.

Det gis skriftlig informasjon og innhentes skriftlig samtykke. Informasjonsskrivet finnes tilfredsstillende under forutsetning av at dato for prosjektslutt, 27.04.2012, og formålet med lagring av datamaterialet presiseres i skrivet. Siden det eventuelle fremtidige prosjektets formål allerede er bestemt, jf. e-post mottatt fra student 12.10.2011, er det ombudets vurdering at det allerede nå innhentes samtykker for det fremtidige prosjektet.

Ingen enkeltpersoner vil kunne gjenkjennes i publiseringer (masteroppgaven) fra prosjektet.

Prosjektslutt er 27.04.2012. Ved prosjektslutt skal datamaterialet, som ikke er blitt publisert, lagres. Datamaterialet skal lagres på et sikkert sted ved Universitetet i Oslo i 2 år, 27.04.2014 skal datamaterialet anonymiseres.

Datamaterialet lagres for en eventuell oppfølgingsundersøkelse hvor formålet med det fremtidige prosjektet er å gjennomføre en komparativ analyse av den rettslige bevisstheten blant deltagere på feltet. Personvernombudet minner om at dersom en eventuell oppfølgingsundersøkelse vil ha et annet formål enn det som det er innhentet samtykker til, må det innhentes nye samtykker til en eventuell oppfølgingsundersøkelse. En eventuell oppfølgingsundersøkelse skal meldes til ombudet i god tid før den tar til.



## Appendix 4: Letter from University of Oslo for data collection

UiO : Faculty of Educational Sciences  
University of Oslo

Date: 19 September 2011

Your ref.:

Our ref.: int./2011 SW/db

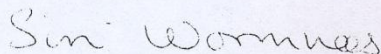
### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that **PARVEEN, Shahnaz**, date of birth 16.10.1968, is a full-time student pursuing a course of study at the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo, Norway, leading to the degree of Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education (M. Phil. SNE).

This is a continuous two-year programme run on the "sandwich" principle, which involves periods of study and field work/research in both Norway and the home country. The student has successfully completed both the first and second semester of the initial study period in Norway and is now working on the collection of data and the writing of a thesis during the autumn semester 2011. This involves a period of field work in Bangladesh. The student will return to Norway at the beginning of January 2012 and the period of study will be completed at the end of May 2012 in Norway.

The main responsibility for supervising the research, developmental work and thesis remains with the Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo, Norway. However, we would kindly request that the relevant authorities give the student the access required to the schools and educational establishments necessary in order to undertake field work and research. We would also be most grateful for any assistance that is afforded to the student which enables her to carry out this work, particularly the use of facilities such as access to telephone, fax, e-mail, computer services and libraries at the various educational establishments.

Yours sincerely



Associate Professor Siri Wormnæs

Academic Head of International Master's Programme

Department of Special Needs Education

Officer in charge:

*Denese Brittain*

(+ 47) 22 85 80 75, [d.a.brittain@isp.uio.no](mailto:d.a.brittain@isp.uio.no)



**The Department of Special Needs  
Education (DSNE)**

Postal addr.: PO Box 1140 Blindern, 0318  
Oslo

Visiting addr.: Helga Engshus, 4. etasje,  
Sem Sælunds vei 7, 0371 Oslo

Phone: (+47) 22 85 80 59  
Telefax: (+47) 22 85 80 21  
[postmottak@uv.uio.no](mailto:postmottak@uv.uio.no)  
[www.uv.uio.no/isp/](http://www.uv.uio.no/isp/)  
Org. no.: 971 035 854



## Appendix 5: Consent letter for the Informants

### UIO: Faculty of Educational Science University of Oslo

#### Information Consent letter for Interview Study

University of Oslo

29.10.2011

Dear Mr. /Ms,

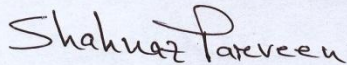
This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my M. Phil degree in the Department of Educational Science at the University of Oslo under the supervision of Professor Harald Martinsen. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

I would appreciate if you would complete this brief interview. Completion of the interview is expected to take about 25 to 30 minutes of your time. The questions are quite general. There are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study. Participation in this project is voluntary and anonymous. Further, all information you provide will be considered confidential. The data collected through this study will be kept for a period of 8 months locked office in my supervisor's lab at the University of Oslo.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please participate in this interview, I will personally conduct the propose interview. If after receiving this letter, you have any questions about this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please feel free to contact Professor Harald Martinsen in his email address ([harald.martinsen@isp.uio.no](mailto:harald.martinsen@isp.uio.no)).

I would like to assure you that the respondents of this study will be anonymous. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Should you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact in the University of Oslo to Denese A Brittain  
Senior Executive Officer  
Administrative Coordinator M. Phil. SNE  
Department of Special Needs Education  
University of Oslo  
Tel +47 22 85 80 75(59)  
Thank you in advance for your interest in this project.

Yours sincerely,



Shahnaz Parveen



[illegible]